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THE

WELDRON FAMILY;

OR,

VICISSITUDES OF FORTUNE.

A STORY

OF

REAL LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND.

In *life* can love be bought with gold?
Are *friendship's* pleasures to be sold?
No! — all that 's worth a wish, a thought,
Fair *virtue* gives, unbribed, unbought.
Cease, then, on trash thy hopes to bind;
Let *nobler* views engage thy mind.

Johnson.

BY MARIA [illegible]

AUTHOR OF A POEM ENTITLED "SUSAN'S VISIT," "LUZETTE," &C. &C.

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PREFACE.

In writing the following pages, the Author has not attempted to describe scenes that exist only in fancy, but has endeavored to give an unvarnished statement of facts. Most of the persons mentioned in the work, are regularly descended from one of our Pilgrim Fathers. The writer was long acquainted with several aged descendants of this Puritan, and from their lips received most of the account given; — the remainder occurred under her own observation. It is proper, however, to remark, that the surnames vary somewhat from the original.

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VICISSITUDES OF FORTUNE, ETC.

CHAPTER I.

Salina and her Mother — One of the Puritans — His Descendants — Delusion of 1646 *and* '59 *— Education.*

'No wonder,' said Salina one day to her mother, as she laid down the History of the Pilgrims, which she had been reading, 'that grandfather so much delighted to dwell upon the remembrance of his *forefathers!*'

'It was ever a pleasant theme to him,' replied her mother, 'as he could readily trace his genealogy back to one who braved the dangers of the deep, and crossed the Atlantic waters, to enjoy the blessings of religious liberty.'

'I often think,' responded Salina, 'that I should love to know what was passing in the minds of my very great-great-grandfather and his companions, while on their passage on board the memorable *Mayflower*, from the old world to these then desolate shores.'

'That must always remain a matter of conjecture,' answered her mother; 'yet we can conceive that their

bosoms were filled with strong emotions, in view of both the past and the future. It is presumable that, in imagination they never pictured to themselves the mighty changes which were to take place in the future aspect of this country. It is true,' continued Mrs. Johnson, 'that they believed the gospel would be planted here, and its ever-attendant blessings realized by their descendants; this was what cheered them and upbore their spirits amid great and innumerable hardships.'

'But think you, mother,' rejoined Salina, 'that they ever dreamed of the rapid march of improvement? of the annihilation of space by steamboats, railroads, and magnetic telegraphs? of the increase of population, commerce, wealth, and of the educational, benevolent, and religious institutions which were to be here enjoyed? or, that our country would ever attain to the conspicuous place among the nations which it now holds?'

'I think not,' answered the mother; 'their minds were not able to grasp the astonishing results which were to follow their seemingly feeble efforts; they conjectured not the advantages which their descendants were to enjoy as the purchase of their toils.'

'It is always gratifying to me,' said the daughter, 'to listen to any account of the Puritans, and particularly so, to what concerns our own family; I wish to be able to trace, readily, the connecting links between the families that have existed, one after another; and also, to remember something definite of the character of each generation, during these two hundred years and more which have glided away since our venerated progenitor landed on Plymouth rock.'

Her mother was much pleased with the interest which Salina felt in the subject, and proceeded to give some particulars connected with the history of their family, during the period to which she had alluded.

'You have often heard me speak,' said Mrs. Johnson, 'of my venerable and much esteemed great-grandfather Weldron. From his lips I learned that the father of his paternal grandsire was one of the self-denying band who first planted the standard of the gospel in this hitherto barbarous country.

'History has furnished you with an account of the struggles and hardships endured by the dauntless, noble-spirited, and energetic few, who came to this savage wilderness to enjoy, untrammeled, that great and inestimable blessing, liberty of conscience.

'John Weldron, the Pilgrim head of our family, was distinguished only for his piety and gentlemanly deportment. I must not omit to state that two others of the name, younger than John, and believed to be his brothers, came from the other continent not long after his arrival, one of whom, in 1646 or '47, fell a victim to the fatal infatuation, occasioned by the supposed existence of *witchcraft*, which made its first appearance in New England one or two years previous.

'The other, who had imbibed the sentiments of the Quakers, at a late period in life, was banished, with all others of similar views, from the Massachusetts colony, by legislative enactments, on pain of death. He returned to his native country, and it is not known what afterwards became of him.

'Jesse Weldron, son of John, is noticed in history as a

military commander, successful in repelling the frequent attacks of the Indians, and was otherwise a valuable member of society.

'His son, Josiah Weldron, early settled in Deerfield, and was a long time an influential resident of that place. Some of his descendants reside there still. Those of his generation were not only sorely tried by the merciless savages by whom they were surrounded, but by the superstitions of the age, which again revived the delusion in regard to witchcraft.

'Joseph Weldron, son of Josiah, and first of the fourth generation, was a zealous promoter of learning, and an eminent ambassador of the truth. One of his sons, whose name was Samuel, was my pious and revered grandfather.'

'I suppose,' said Salina, 'you are well acquainted with the history of your grand-parents.'

'I am,' replied Mrs. Johnson; 'they were among the most wealthy and influential inhabitants of Brookfield. They belonged to that class who appear constantly to increase their wealth with little apparent effort, while their less prosperous neighbors look on, and wonder how they do so. Still, it could not be said, as of too many, that their wealth was used to pamper selfish desires, for they cheerfully imparted much of their substance to gladden the hearts of the destitute. In this, and all other respects, their dispositions were congenial.

'They had seven children, whom they endeavored to bring up in the way they should go, striving, as early in life as possible, to impress upon their minds the value of intellectual culture, combined with moral worth. They

educated their sons, and daughters also, as far as the facilities for acquiring knowledge at that period enabled them to do so.

'You need not imagine that the girls were thoroughly acquainted with the higher branches of study, for at that time, it was thought unnecessary for the minds of females, even among the higher classes in society, to be taxed with pursuing the more abstruse sciences. A young lady was considered well taught, if she understood the common branches, to which, in most cases, was added a practical knowledge of domestic economy.

'In those days there were few parents, in comparison with the same class at the present time, whose daughters esteemed it a hardship to perform nearly or quite all the needle-work of the family, of which they were important members. A girl then, of eight years, who could not knit, was indeed a prodigy.'

It is proper to remark, that, although we are wont to consider our forefathers as worthy models for imitation, yet it is true, that even among them no perfection was found; they had failings, and in giving an impartial account of the individual character of some of their descendants, we must delineate the foibles, as well as dwell upon the virtues, of those of whom we speak.

But, while it would be wrong to hold up the character of those whom we bring before the reader as faultless, we hope it will not be thought that our estimate of human nature is too low. We place not highly-wrought fiction before the mind, and that is our only apology for these pages.

CHAPTER II.

Mr. Weldron — Hannah Hamlin — Anna — Bereavement.

MR. AARON WELDRON, the father of Mrs. Johnson, was a much-beloved son and brother. After what has been said concerning the character of his parents, it hardly need be stated that the sisters of Mr. Weldron were, in their youthful days, instructed in the great truth that *to be useful is to be happy.* Surrounded by all that wealth could command, they felt it a duty to exert themselves for the benefit of those within the sphere of their influence.

Their brothers were favored ones among that number; for these sisters did much, very much, to attach them to their own sweet homes; and, as Mr. Weldron often remarked, their kindness and sisterly attentions were efficient safeguards to them from temptations to wander in the pathway of vice and folly.

To Mr. Weldron, there was no place so delightful as home, as long as his sisters remained under the parental roof; but, as they were all his seniors in years, they married while he was young, and settled in different places, some of them several miles distant from Brookfield. This circumstance led him to choose a companion

and settle in life, earlier than he otherwise would have done.

At the age of twenty-two, he was united in wedlock to Miss Hannah Hamlin, a young lady born on the same day with himself, about two miles distant from the residence of his parents. In childhood they attended the same school, and their early formed acquaintance with each other, was kept up by often meeting in the social circle.

The parents of Hannah were highly respectable and in affluent circumstances; still they possessed not that refinement of mind and manners, with which the family of Mr. Weldron were gifted. There was, it is true, some congeniality of taste and sentiment, in regard to the most important subjects, relative to the interests of a family, existing in the minds of young Mr. Weldron and his wife; still, there was little sympathy manifested by her, on some points, where he felt most acutely.

There was, too, an evident inferiority of intellect, on the part of Hannah, and her disposition was naturally haughty and overbearing, the very reverse of that of her husband, who was ever affable and mild in his deportment.

At the time this union took place, it was a matter of surprise to such as were interested in the affair, that two individuals, so unlike each other, should ever think of forming a connection for life; and some, looking rather significantly, said, 'It must be that matches are *made*.'

The young couple commenced house-keeping in their native place, on a beautiful spot in the pleasantest part of New England. They began life in a house which had stood many years; but they did not occupy it long before Mr. Weldron's prosperity enabled him to remove it from

the beautiful site on which it stood, and erect a most elegant mansion in its stead.

He became wealthy; and his kindness and liberality were commensurate with his abundance. His benevolence to the needy, was often the theme of conversation among those around him—it was well known that in Mr. Weldron the poor and distressed could always find a friend and counsellor, as the following incident will illustrate:

An aged African, who had been long in this country, was, on one occasion, offered for sale within a few miles of the residence of this kind man. Of course, no one felt very anxious to purchase a slave who was in the decline of life, and the poor man was kept in waiting a long time by his owner, who hoped to procure a purchaser.

The negro had often heard of the extreme kindness of this gentleman; and when he saw him pass near where he was standing, exclaimed, 'O massa Weldron, do buy poor Jube and let him go back to Guinea! pray do, massa, take pity on poor Jube!' then, taking hold of his coat, entreated him with sobs to take him home with him.

Mr. Weldron, affected almost to tears, replied: 'Jube, I will redeem you from slavery and send you back to your native country, as soon as an opportunity presents for you to go comfortably. To-morrow you shall go to my house.'

On hearing this, the poor creature was quite overcome; and when, on the evening of the following day, he found himself seated in Mr. Weldron's kitchen, his gratitude was unbounded.

Mr. Weldron was careful to fulfil his promise to the

aged negro, and soon after sent him in a vessel to Guinea, under the care of a humane captain.

As time passed on, the family of this gentleman increased, until, at the expiration of twelve years from the time of his marriage, he could count around his table five daughters and two sons.

Mr. Weldron was devotedly attached to his children; and his greatest, I had almost said, only visible fault was, a proneness to indulge them to their hurt. His wife was not naturally fond of children; and her patience was soon exhausted, whenever they were wayward or perverse.

Their second daughter, whose name was Anna, was so unfortunate as never to possess the confidence of her mother, but upon the slightest occasion would be severely censured and rebuked by her. Mr. Weldron saw, with pain, the effect the cold treatment of her mother had upon the child, and was led into an opposite error, in striving to save her spirits from depression.

It will readily be supposed that the combined influence of both parents, was exceedingly injurious to the mind of Anna; for, while the unnatural conduct of her mother disheartened, the too great fondness of her father was calculated to cause her, with the proud, independent disposition which she possessed, to regard her mother with something like a feeling of defiance. This feeling grew with her growth, and strengthened with her strength, while she was regarded by her mother with a feeling of jealousy that her own rights were invaded.

On the whole, the children of this family were well taught; and, except the too great partiality of Mr. Weldron for them, there was no fault noticeable in his method

of training them. They were taught to reverence the Sabbath, to obey their parents, to be kind to all, and charitable to the poor; and they were directed to take the Bible as the guide of their life.

Anna had nearly arrived at the age of fourteen, before any event of great importance occurred. At that time, one evening in the month of December, Mr. Weldron informed the family, while seated at the tea-table, that he was going to ride that evening with one of his neighbors to an adjacent town to transact business of importance, which would, probably detain him until a late hour.

The family were so much accustomed to the absence of Mr. Weldron, on business, that they scarcely thought of his leaving them; and when he looked into the nursery and bade them a cheerful good-by, they confidently expected to receive his fond caresses again early on the following morning.

The morning came, and the children arose at the usual hour. After they were ready for breakfast and waiting, expecting every moment to be called, they noticed an expression of sorrow, upon the countenances of two of the servants, whom one of the children saw with surprise standing a short distance from the house, conversing in a whisper, and occasionally looking earnestly down the road, in the direction of the town of M——, the place to which Mr. Weldron had gone, the preceding night.

This excited the curiosity of all the children, who went immediately into the kitchen to inquire the cause of their unusual appearance. Anna asked the servants why they all looked so sad; but each one she addressed turned away from her, giving an evasive answer. She then went

to the apartment in which her parents usually slept, but found it unoccupied, and the appearance of the room was such as to lead her to suppose that it had been unoccupied during the preceding night.

Filled with anxious apprehension, Anna returned to the kitchen, saying, imploringly, 'Do tell me if anything dreadful has happened?' She then, without waiting for a reply, asked why her mother was absent, 'for,' continued the child, 'if she had only gone away to watch, as she expected to go last night, she would have returned before now?'

The servant told her that her mother did go out to watch with a sick child.

'But where,' inquired the girl, 'did my father stay during the night? he expected to have returned rather late you know.'

'I know it my dear,' replied the other, 'but people cannot always do as they intend to,' then with feelings of emotion, which she struggled hard, yet vainly, to suppress, added, 'you will know soon enough if anything unpleasant has taken place.'

The servant then conducted all the children to the room where their breakfast was in readiness. They sat down, but little if any food was tasted by the eldest of them, as their anxiety deprived them of any disposition to eat. After the children left the table, they went into the sitting-room, where they found assembled several neighbors and friends, who sat conversing together, in a low and pensive tone.

When the children entered the room, they were regarded by these friends with an expression of countenance

that bespoke sympathy. The eldest two understood its meaning, and Anna inquired of one of the gentlemen present if any accident had befallen her father. The individual whom she addressed was affected, and it was some moments ere he could command his voice to speak.

At length he said, taking Anna affectionately by the hand, 'Your father was thrown from his horse while riding towards home last night and badly hurt.'

'Will he die, or is he already dead?' quickly interrogated the distressed daughter.

'I fear,' replied the gentleman, 'that you must part with your beloved parent, Anna!'

'Have you seen him?' asked she eagerly.

'Yes,' replied her sympathizing friend with much hesitation, 'and he is no more.'

To describe the agony of feeling evinced by these children, upon hearing this mournful intelligence, would be impossible; language would fail us in attempting to do so. Anna felt, more keenly than the others, that she had lost a friend that would never be replaced.

As the children sat weeping, and most of them sobbing audibly, Anna looked for a moment out of the window in the direction in which her father was to be brought home. Her attention was immediately arrested by seeing a procession of sleighs coming towards the house.

In one of the sleighs Anna saw the remains of her idolized parent laying wrapped in his cloak. She shrieked at the sight, and fell fainting upon the floor. When she recovered, her irreparable loss again came to mind, and again caused her to faint. It was some time ere she

entirely recovered from the effect which the sight she had witnessed, had produced upon her agitated nerves.

In the mean time the corpse of Mr. Weldron had been placed in the parlor, and clad in the habiliments of death. His companion sat in silence, surrounded by her fatherless children.

She had heard the overwhelming intelligence that her husband had been thrown from his horse and fatally wounded, while at the house of a friend, whither she had gone to attend the sick, the preceding night. A messenger had been immediately despatched from the house into which Mr. Weldron had been carried, to inform Mrs. Weldron, as gently as possible, of the calamity.

The person sent, not finding her at home, made known his errand to the servants, and was accompanied by one of them to the place where she was. Upon hearing the sad tidings, Mrs. Weldron was almost distracted, and hastened to the house in which lay the lifeless body of her husband. She remained there until a jury had been called to examine the body; after which she accompanied it, with a large number of weeping friends, to her own home.

Many more neighbors and friends assembled in this house of mourning, endeavoring to afford some feeble consolation to those so deeply afflicted; and they did afford the sweetest solace that earth can give. These mourners felt that there was power in sympathy to prevent them from sinking in the depths of despondency.

O, there is a charm in the refined, tenderly expressed pity of friends, that is unrivalled in this vale of sorrow and

tears, and is ever held sacred by those who have been called to partake deeply of the cup of trial! Yes,

> Sympathy shall bless, when even
> All earth's joys have passed away;
> Sweetly shall it live in Heaven
> Through eternal, blissful day!

The sorrow expressed by the many friends who visited this house of mourning, was very great. Many felt that in the sudden removal of Mr. Weldron, themselves, as well as his family, had sustained a loss that could not easily be repaired. Among the number of such was the individual who rode to M—— with the deceased. This person lived only a short distance from the residence of Mr. Weldron, and often went in and spent much time in looking upon his remains.

As no one but this gentleman, whose name was Lyman, was with him at the time he fell from his horse, and as there was a bruise discovered upon his back, it was conjectured by some that Mr. Lyman had given him a blow that caused him to fall, without his horse's having stumbled, as this person had affirmed.

That individual related the circumstances of his death as having occurred in the following manner; but as he was a man who accustomed himself to partake rather freely of ardent spirits, his testimony was considered doubtful. Mr. Lyman said, that when Mr. Weldron and himself were returning to Brookfield, he proposed stopping at a public house, according to the prevalent custom in those days, to procure something to drink, as the night was intensely cold. Mr. Weldron declined accepting the pro-

posal, and when they had reached the inn, sat upon his horse while Mr. Lyman went into the bar-room.

After waiting some time, Mr. Weldron rode slowly along, and when his companion came out of the tavern he felt a little disappointed on finding he had been left. He immediately put spurs to his horse, in hopes of overtaking him, and had almost reached him, when he saw Mr. Weldron thrown from his horse.

Mr. Lyman sprang in an instant to his assistance — he spoke to him, but received no answer. He then attempted to raise him from the ground, and on doing so perceived that his head was bleeding profusely, from a wound which must have been made by a sharp stone upon which his head had struck. Blood was to be seen upon the stone, a part of which was covered with snow, and his friends would have rejoiced to know that he had received no blow from Mr. Lyman. Still they felt that if it was through the agency of rum this heavy stroke had fallen upon them, they could not but pity the individual who was so unwise as to be deceived by the subtle power of this insidious foe.

The time that elapsed ere the beloved remains of Mr. Weldron were to be removed from the sight of his bereaved circle at home, seemed short; and when the day appointed for the funeral arrived, the children felt that they could not endure to have him carried from the house.

This was a day long to be remembered in Brookfield. The church in which the funeral exercises were held was crowded at an early hour, and it was impossible for many to be gratified who were anxious to look for the last time

at the benign countenance with which they had long be familiar.

Many were the encomiums pronounced upon the ch acter of the deceased, by the crowd that stood assembl many of whom strove in vain to hear the excellent a appropriate discourse, as it fell from the lips of the r erend clergyman. Few that did hear it, but were affect to tears.

The words selected for the occasion were those dressed by David to Jonathan, when he said, '*Truly as Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step tween me and death.*'

Much, very much, was said of the universal bene lence of Mr. Weldron, by all; and the remark that 'T poor in Brookfield had lost their friend,' was often ma There was much ground for such an assertion; and wh his clay-cold body was deposited in its last resting-pla and the long procession of weeping relatives and frie turned from the grave to go to their homes, a sole stillness pervaded the mourning concourse which stron bespoke the feelings with which they had regarded t deceased.

Many sympathizing friends accompanied the family their now lonely dwelling, some of whom remained seve days, to cheer, if possible, the sorrowing ones.

CHAPTER III.

Loss of Property — Anna Abroad — Unhappy Union — Removal.

WHEN the time arrived that the members of this afflicted family were left with only their own number seated around the table, and the seat vacant which had been occupied by the beloved friend who had been so unexpectedly snatched from them, they felt more acutely than ever their sore bereavement.

Anna, who had received the kindest and most indulgent treatment from her father, now mourned in view of the want of sympathy she experienced from her mother. She felt that her best friend was indeed torn from her — that he who would ever carefully hide her faults, and sympathize in all her youthful trials, was forever hid from her too fond gaze. 'O,' said she, one day, to a friend, 'could you but know with what strong affection I have regarded my dear, *dear* father, you could better understand my feelings since his death: I loved him but too well.'

Anna realized that she had been guilty of idolizing her departed parent, and her heart was ready to adopt the repining sentiment expressed by the poet, who says,

> 'I never loved a tree or flower
> But 't was the first to fade away.'

This severe affliction affected the health of this hi the delicate girl, and she really needed the tenderest care a sympathy of her mother; yet strange as it may appe that mother understood not the disposition of her daug ter; she imputed most of her dejection of mind to oddi and ill-humor.

As Mrs. Weldron made no exertion to gain the con dence of Anna, it is not a matter of surprise that she d not possess it; neither is it strange that her young hea longed to confide its sorrows to some friend who could u derstand her disposition and character. Such a frie she found in her maternal grandmother, for Mrs. Haml saw with pain the indifference with which her daught regarded the early sorrows of Anna, and was led by fe ings of justice and pity to endeavor to be a mother to h grand-daughter.

Unexpected and bitter trials still awaited this family; trials, too, of which they never before had dreamed. We have said that Mr. Weldron possessed an abundance of wealth; such was the fact at the time of his death. He had, however, been in the habit, as most merchants are, of endorsing notes to oblige those who wished to obtain credit, and often to enable such to procure large sums of money, as his signature was ever considered a sufficient guaranty for safety.

A short time before he died, he laid himself liable, in this manner, for about seventy thousand dollars. In performing these friendly acts, it never occurred to this noble-spirited man that he might be doing wrong to his own dear family; for he felt perfect confidence in the integrity of those he was willing to assist. Yet in doing so he was

most unfortunate, and through the mismanagement of those for whom he became responsible, his family was reduced from wealth to moderate circumstances. Of this fact Mrs. Weldron became aware, in a few weeks after the removal of her husband.

When she was first apprised of the state of her affairs, she was overwhelmed with sorrow; for she had valued herself, as too many do, according to the riches she possessed; and when she found that these had taken wings and flown away, all fortitude forsook her, and she could no longer bear up under her accumulated sorrows.

Her struggles with pride were severe. It is true she was not reduced to poverty; but she must retrench her expenditures, dismiss some of her servants, and take the care of her children upon herself, a task from which she had been hitherto exempt.

From such a change in her circumstances she recoiled with a feeling of the strongest aversion; and but for the fact that she had been taught the first principles of the gospel in early life, and the remembrance of her duty as an accountable being came before her mind, she would willfully have preferred death to life, and gone unbidden into the presence of her Creator.

After some months had gone by, and Mrs. Weldron found that she must rise superior to these selfish feelings, or distress her children in many ways, she endeavored to assume a cheerful appearance in performing the duty—to her a tedious one—of caring for her household. In losing her wealth, of which she had often boasted, she felt that much of her importance was lost in the estimation of

her acquaintance; and the idea to her was almost insupportable.

At this juncture, a sister of Mrs. Weldron's mother requested permission for Anna to spend some time with her at her residence, about two miles from the place where the now disheartened girl had thus far lived. Mrs. Weldron readily consented to part with her, and accordingly Anna left the parental roof to reside in the family of her aunt, who had but one daughter of her own.

Mrs. Hamlin, the grandmother of Anna, dwelt with her sister, and the poor girl soon began to realize the effect of the kindness of this lovely woman upon her depressed spirits. They were a mutual comfort to each other, for Anna read aloud to her grandmother very often, and paid her many of the little nameless attentions so grateful to those in declining years.

Anna loved this aged relative most tenderly; and while she lived, derived her greatest happiness from her society. She seldom saw her mother, and when she did it did not seem to her that this, her only parent, felt much if any interest in her welfare; and after having spent a few days at her maternal home, she would return to the home of her aunt with feelings of pleasure and satisfaction.

We have told our readers that the natural disposition of Anna was proud and independent; they are also acquainted with the parental influence which was exerted over her mind in childhood and early youth, and this has probably led many to suppose that the effect produced upon the mind of the unfortunate girl was most unhappy. Such was lamentably true, as she was led to regard with a feeling of distrust those who, but for her unjust sus-

picions of their motives, would have proved themselves valuable friends to the fatherless, and, in one sense, orphan girl.

When Anna was about seventeen years of age, her mother formed a marriage connection with a gentleman, whom, of all others, this unfortunate girl dreaded to have allied to the family. She loved her younger sisters and brothers with peculiar fondness. It was a bitter trial to her feelings to think they must be, in any degree, controlled by one for whom she felt the most decided aversion, as was the case with Mr. Kingman, for so he was called.

Her mother was aware of the state of Anna's feelings with respect to the change which she had made in her situation. Her better judgment, too, convinced her that she had done an injury to her fatherless children, by being governed by sinister considerations, in allowing her destiny to become connected with that of a person for whose character none of them felt respect.

Anna was the only one who presumed to express disapprobation to her mother in words; but the silent yet eloquent tears which flowed in profusion down the cheeks of each of her children, on the evening upon which this marriage took place, showed plainly that all felt unhappy.

Mr. Kingman, as may be presumed, reciprocated the feelings manifested towards him; consequently a mutual dislike was cherished between himself and the children of his ambitious wife.

The best friends of this lady regretted, exceedingly, that she had pursued such a course, and her mother and sisters expressed their decided disapprobation. At this,

Mrs. Kingman took umbrage, and ceased not to importune her husband to remove the family to some other place, until he willingly complied with her solicitations.

Mrs. Kingman did not wish to have her eldest daughters remove from Brookfield with her, because their presence always gave her uneasiness, after her second marriage, by rebuking her want of principle in sacrificing the peace of her helpless children to the love of money; and she scrupled not to separate those endeared by the ties of nature and affection.

The distress caused these dear children, by this wicked separation, was very great. The anticipation of it cost the eldest two of them many sleepless nights; and when the moment arrived that they must bid each other adieu, for many years, if not forever, their grief was almost insupportable.

The misguided mother could not but feel poignant grief on witnessing the anguish of her children, and strove to shorten the pangs of separation by hurrying the younger ones into the vehicle which was to carry them on their journey, and then hastily bidding her waiting relatives and friends farewell, gave directions to the driver, who drove rapidly away.

CHAPTER IV.

Mr. Savage — Mrs. Kingman — Children abroad — Affliction — Simon — Epidemic.

AFTER Mrs. Kingman left Brookfield, Anna continued with her aunt for a short time only, after which, with the decided approval of her grandmother, and other friends, she entered into a matrimonial connection with a young gentleman worthy in every respect of her affection and confidence.

Her mother gladly consented to this union, not so much on account of the merit of the person who was to be by it admitted into her family, as because he was the only heir to an entailed estate of great value.

The consideration that the ancestors of Mr. Savage were in affluent circumstances, had little influence in causing Anna to choose him as her partner for life; he possessed traits of character which she admired; his disposition was mild and conciliating, almost to a fault; he was generous, open-hearted and friendly, and his feelings harmonized with her own.

His countenance was expressive of intelligence and good humor, while his manners were pleasing.

This couple entered into each other's plans for future happiness, and seemed to live but for each other. Years passed, yet left this confiding pair unchanged in their

affections, except that their confidence in each other grew stronger and their attachment firmer.

Anna became the mother of several children, and as she mostly took care of them herself she found no opportunity, for several years, to visit that part of her mother's family which had removed to a distance from Brookfield, the place where she dwelt many years after her marriage. She occasionally received letters from her brothers and sisters, and understood their circumstances.

She had learned the fact, though not from her mother, that Mr. Kingman had not proved a very agreeable companion to her; that the children had begged permission to leave their home and spend their time elsewhere, whenever an opportunity offered. The daughters, who, it will be recollected, were older than the sons, married early in life and settled in different places, near the home of their mother, and after they were gone, their brothers, at their own request, were allowed to spend much of the time with their sisters, leaving Mrs. Kingman with only her husband and one little daughter, who was born after their removal to that part of the country which fifty years ago was called the *West*.

Mrs. Kingman was often forced to reflect upon the want of discretion she had manifested in regard to her children. She had learned, by severe experience, that money alone could not ensure happiness. The temper of her second husband being the very opposite of Mr. Weldron's, she had with him found difficulties to encounter which, during the life of the first, she had been a stranger to; for this lamented individual always endeavored to make every member of his household happy.

His wife was acquainted with trouble only in the abstract, while he was spared to her. No wonder, then, if when she experienced treatment from Mr. Kingman the very reverse of this, that she was often led to contrast her present situation with the past, and sigh to think she had not better appreciated the blessings Providence had bestowed upon her.

The years spent with but little other society at home than that of a peevish husband, were the most tedious to Mrs. Kingman of any she had ever seen. She was always glad of an opportunity to go out from home, but never felt anxious to have him accompany her; for the truth is she dreaded his presence.

It must be said, however, that Mrs. Kingman, to the astonishment of all who knew her naturally proud and irritable disposition, patiently bore with the faults and infirmities of her husband until his death. After this event, which was a light affliction compared with the death of Mr. Weldron, she resolved to remain a widow, which resolution she kept to the end of her life.

Her time was divided between her children; and it may truly be said of her that her 'last days were her best days.' Possessed of a vigorous constitution, which had not been impaired by the endurance of hardship, Mrs. Kingman was able to travel much, in the declining years of her life, and more than once visited Brookfield, and spent some weeks each time with Anna, who was settled in life, much to the satisfaction of her mother.

Absence, too, seemed to have obliterated all that was unpleasant in the past from the memory of each, so that the time they spent together, in after life, was agreeable

and profitable to both mother and daughter. A pleasing change had taken place in the feelings of the once purse-proud and pleasure-seeking Mrs. Kingman.

She was slow at first to learn the lesson which her Heavenly Father would teach in disappointing her fondest earthly hopes. It was hard for her to feel that she was created for higher pursuits and loftier purposes than had hitherto engrossed her affections; but affliction was made the means of effectually teaching her the vanity of resting upon sublunary things.

Anna, or Mrs. Savage, as we ought now to call her, had never disciplined her feelings in order to prepare herself to bear up amid the vicissitudes which might attend her in life. She had never reflected that she might yet be called to pass through still deeper trials than she had ever before experienced. Such ideas, to her imagination, were too gloomy to be indulged, and she put them far from her, feeling willing to believe that it was unnecessary for her to be afflicted more, while she cherished a feeling of pride, when reflecting that she had repined no more at the dispensation of heaven.

No wonder, then, that with such feelings of self-dependence, she thought it hard if called to experience merely a trifling disappointment. On one occasion, her husband went from home, to a distant city, to transact urgent business. On leaving, he informed his wife that he should probably return in a few days, at the same time naming the day on which she might expect either himself or a letter.

The time appeared very long indeed to Mrs. Savage, until the day arrived on which she expected confidently to

see him at home; but when, instead, she received a letter, stating that important and unexpected business would probably detain him a week longer than he anticipated, she wept hysterically, and would not be reconciled.

Years after this occurrence, she often related this anecdote to warn the unreflecting against the sin of proving ungrateful to their Heavenly Father, by indulging in selfish sorrow.

Said she, 'I can never forget the kind yet unwelcome rebuke which I received on that occasion from an aged Christian, who was the person that handed me the letter. On seeing my evident distress, he inquired the cause of it, and when I informed him, he mildly remarked, "I was afraid, my dear child, that some evil tidings had reached you. Believe me, if you allow yourself to weep thus, in view of so small a cross, I fear you will have to wade through seas of trouble ere you leave this world of care and pain. Try to be thankful that your companion is in health, and wipe away those childish tears."' Mrs. Savage affirmed that her better judgment told her he was right and she was wrong, yet she considered him cold-hearted and stern.

Sixteen years passed away, while she was blest with the sympathy of him whose society was her *beau-ideal* of earthly happiness. It was then her prospects were unexpectedly darkened with more than midnight gloom. In consequence of taking a sudden and violent cold, Mr. Savage was brought low by distressing illness.

This was a heavy stroke to his companion, and one for which she was entirely unprepared. Her own health at this time was very delicate, and she fondly depended upon

his cheerfulness and constant kind attentions, to beguile her of the anxiety and depression which but for him she would have endured.

Fearful, therefore, were her forebodings in regard to the recovery of Mr. Savage, as day after day she saw his malady rage with increasing violence.

At length, one day, she ventured to inquire of the physician who attended him, if it was his opinion that her husband would be restored to health. The doctor, who was a gentleman somewhat advanced in years, and one too who feared his God, was evidently disturbed by this question, and would gladly have given the deeply afflicted wife an evasive reply. But this he could not do, for Mrs. Savage, unsatisfied with anything short of his decided opinion, continued to implore him to tell her, declaring that suspense was in this case as bad as certainty.

The kind-hearted man, affectionately taking her hand, at length said to her, 'My dear child, nothing is impossible with a wonder-working God.'

This answer convinced Mrs. Savage that there was but too much ground for the apprehension of evil. Unfortunately for this afflicted lady, she was that very night confined to her bed in becoming the mother of a little son. It was a greater grief than she had yet endured, to be prevented from ministering to the wants of her companion, as far as her strength would permit.

This circumstance was a source of mutual sorrow, both to Mr. Savage and his wife, and the time seemed long to them, until, after the expiration of a week from the birth of their infant, Mrs. Savage, in a state of great weakness, and contrary to the wishes of her friends, repaired again

to the bed-side of her husband, and found him evidently sinking under the violence of his disease.

The excitement of Mrs. Savage's feelings enabled her to keep up, when her want of strength, under other circumstances, would have prevented her doing so. But as she saw that death was advancing, with rapid strides, to mark her beloved husband as his victim, she felt not her bodily infirmities, but endeavored, by her welcome presence and assiduous attentions, to smooth the dying pillow of him whom she loved with all the ardor of her heart.

The day but too soon dawned upon Mrs. Savage, so fatal to her earthly comfort, the day on which he, who for so many years had been the partner of her joys and sorrows, was to close his eyes forever upon this world, and bid adieu to a helpless family, whom he loved with a father's fond affection.

His sickness was consumption, of the most rapid character, which prostrated its victim in the short space of one month. His sufferings were intense; but his wife was consoled, in some degree, by witnessing his patient endurance of them.

Once, during his dying hours, when he appeared overcome by seeing the sorrow of his beloved companion, he grasped her hand convulsively, and attempting to draw her towards him, exclaimed, 'Come, let us sleep in death together.'

He soon regained his composure, however, and calmly bade his wife and children farewell, — after which he cheerfully said, 'O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!' and quietly fell asleep in death, with scarce a struggle or a groan.

The afflicted woman, on witnessing her husband's last conflict with the king of terrors, was overpowered with the intensity of her emotions. She retired to her bed, upon which lay her infant which had been ushered into this now darksome world, only one fortnight before he was made fatherless.

This was an inscrutable Providence; one of those events, the design of which we may not know now, but 'shall know hereafter.' The pious can always derive comfort from the reflection that 'the Judge of all the earth doeth right.' He, too, sees the end from the beginning, and 'does not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men,' but always

> 'Wounds them for His mercy's sake,
> —— And wounds to heal.'

Mrs. Savage was a stranger to vital godliness, at the time that she was, under such circumstances, bereaved of that friend to whom she had given her undivided affection, forgetting that He who had bestowed so great a blessing upon her, was entitled to the first place in her heart. Of that Being she had been unmindful, until, overtaken by the dark tempests of sorrow, she had, like the mariner, when surrounded by dangers on the tempestuous ocean, called upon him in distress.

Glad indeed should we be, to be able to inform the reader that the severe affliction experienced by Mrs. Savage, at this time, was the means of leading her to place her confidence in Him who knows not even the shadow of a turn, but is *the same yesterday, to-day, and forever;* yet such is not the fact, though it indirectly was the means of

doing so at a period in life remote from this occasion of never-to-be-forgotten sorrow.

It was with difficulty that Mrs. Savage sustained herself during the funeral services of her husband; and after the remains of him so precious to her sight were carried to the grave, and the assembly of pitying friends had withdrawn from the house, she was compelled to take her bed immediately, from which she did not arise for many weeks. A fever, which was the result of the too great effort she had made, reduced her very low; and her life was despaired of for many days.

At this time, an epidemic fever raged in Roxbury, the place in which she now dwelt; many fell victims to its malignant power; among them the valued nurse of this lady, who had taken care of her during the height of her sickness. The widow felt, when her kind attendant was obliged to be carried sick from the house, that *all these things were against her.*

Her children were all sick with the prevailing disorder, except the babe, which had been carried to a nurse living a few miles distant from its mother. It was hard for Mrs. Savage to procure a nurse, even at an exorbitant price, and harder still to find those who were not afraid to watch; a few only ventured to take care of the sick during the night, and such as did so demanded an unreasonable price for their services. A sad comment this, it will be admitted, upon poor human nature! who that knows this fact but will acknowledge its selfishness?

CHAPTER V.

Dr. Walton — Mrs. Johnson — Husband absconded — Loraine in the army — His return — Eliza.

We ought to have informed the reader, that only a few months previous to the death of Mr. Savage, he had removed his family to a place upwards of fifty miles distant from Brookfield. Consequently, at the time when his disconsolate and greatly afflicted widow stood most in need of the society and sympathy of those whom she had ever been accustomed to regard as friends, she found herself in the midst of a circle composed almost entirely of strangers. Yet there were rays of light beaming through the dark cloud which overshadowed her earthly prospects, which faintly illumined her lonely dwelling.

She was not destitute of means to procure whatever was necessary for the comforts of herself and children, and there were some dear friends whose kindness and occasional presence in her sick room, were among the mercy-drops commingled by indulgent Heaven with the bitter draught He at this time saw best to cause her to partake of.

Slowly did Mrs. Savage recover from this sickness, and glad would she have been, as she sometimes said, to have been at that time removed from earth, had it not been

true that she was the mother of six fatherless children, the eldest of whom was only fourteen years of age.

Her physician was a truly good man, and did as much to benefit the afflicted lady by the manifestation of kind feelings, united with friendly counsel, as by administering physical restoratives to her frail and care-worn body.

Mrs. Savage was greatly attached to Dr. Walton, grateful for the interest he showed in her family, by his faithful attention not only to herself, but to her suffering little ones, who were deprived, in the hour of greatest need, of that untiring care which is prompted only by a mother's love.

Well would it be were all medical men, like Dr. Walton, governed by the loftier feelings of their souls, as they would thus be the means of exerting a most salutary influence wherever, in the providence of their Heavenly Father, they might be called.

Doctor Walton saw, with heartfelt pleasure, that the strength of Mrs. Savage was gradually returning, so as to enable her again to take care of her fatherless children; and he advised her to mingle, as much as her health would permit, in cheerful society; saying, at the same time, that duty called loudly upon her to do so, not only for her own sake, but for the sake of those dependent beings her Father in heaven had entrusted to her care.

Great was the conflict in the mind of Mrs. Savage, ere she could cease to dwell upon her afflictions, for she felt that she was hardly dealt with — that the chastising rod which it had pleased her Father, God, to lay upon her, had been too heavily inflicted. Recently arisen from a bed of sickness, surrounded by children who were but par-

tially recovered from dangerous illness, knowing too well that their recent misfortunes had greatly abridged her means of support, she sat one morning thinking she must endeavor to pursue some course which would have a tendency to divert her thoughts from her own feelings, when her babe was brought home to her, in consequence of the sudden and alarming sickness of the woman who had nursed him for several months.

This was an unexpected trial to the mother. She knew not what to do with him, as he had thus far been nursed by this person, and was unaccustomed to taking his food from a spoon. She tried immediately to procure another nurse, but was unable to hear of any living near her. She was told of a woman who would probably be glad to take the little creature, if he was carried to her.

This person resided in the place where Mrs. Savage had spent the greater part of her life; she was acquainted with her, and felt that her darling child would be better provided for, if entrusted to the care of this individual, than if he remained with her; yet there were obstacles in the way of getting the babe to her; the weather was cold, for it was December, and Mrs. Savage could not endure the idea of having him carried by any one with whom the child was unacquainted, as he was at an age, and of a disposition to be afraid of strangers. To go herself, appeared an arduous undertaking; still she determined to do so, and see her sweet babe placed in the arms of one to whom she could safely entrust him.

She travelled in a carriage, and was obliged to spend one night upon the road, at a public house, on account of her weakness, and the fatigue she endured in holding the

timid little one in her lap most of the way. A kind friend accompanied her upon this journey, and another engaged to take charge of the lonely little flock at home during her absence.

Mrs. Savage reached the place of her destination in safety, at an early hour on the second day after leaving her home. Seeing many faces which she had not beheld since the death of her husband, revived many painful recollections; still she received much consolation from those who wept with her over the sad blight of her brightest earthly hopes.

It was a source of pleasure to see her babe very soon become familiar with the lady, who cheerfully received and enfolded him in the arms of her affection, having recently lost a sweet little one herself.

As soon as Mrs. Savage had recovered from the fatigue of her journey to Brookfield, she returned to her children. With an aching heart she parted from her dear infant; yet could she but have had even a faint presentiment of what in after life she was to suffer on account of this very child, she would have scarcely deemed it a cross, in comparison, to leave him, under existing circumstances.

Mrs. Savage, on returning to her home, endeavored to wear an air of cheerfulness, although it was often foreign to her heart, that her children might be spared those pangs which she was aware would be inflicted upon their sympathizing feelings, if she indulged in sorrow.

She was enabled to educate her children, and introduce them to society such as she had been wont to mingle in, by dint of great personal exertion, to which was added a

wise forecast of thought upon the subject of domestic prudence.

Not many months after the death of her husband, Mrs. Savage opened a respectable boarding-house, the avails of which, notwithstanding the increase of her expenses, by the increasing age of her children, afforded her more than a genteel support.

Years passed on, and there was little change in the prospects of this lady. Her older children were placed at a boarding-school, of the first character; her younger ones at schools, near home, while Simon, the youngest, at the earnest solicitation of the lady who assumed the care of him in infancy, was allowed to remain with her. Mrs. Savage often visited the child, and oftener was informed by letter of his welfare.

It would be natural to suppose that, situated in the favorable circumstances in which this widowed mother then was, she might have passed her days in contentment and comparative peace, yet such was by no means the fact. She had yet to wade through still deeper waters than had ever before flowed over her pathway of life.

We sometimes wonder at the short-sightedness of those whose judgment we have heretofore regarded as excellent, and thus are forcibly reminded, that 'To err is human.' It was a source of the greatest astonishment to the friends of Mrs. Savage, after she had quietly spent several years in widowhood, and had managed her affairs with so much discretion, to hear that she intended to change her situation, by entering again into wedlock.

The gentleman whom she expected to marry was better known to some of the acquaintance of Mrs. Savage than

to herself. He possessed, it is true, an amiable disposition, to which was added a mind highly cultivated, while his manners were refined and peculiarly fascinating; yet it was known to some that he had one fault, and one that eclipsed all his virtues, and that was, a proneness to indulge occasionally in the use of ardent spirits.

He was by no means an habitual drunkard; but he had more than once been seen when under the influence of liquor, by those who knew that he was anxious to become connected with Mrs. Savage. Her respected friend, the physician who had attended her during the seasons of trial through which she had passed, and who felt deeply interested in the welfare of her family, warned her of the dangerous position in which she stood. She listened to him with a feeling of veneration, and appreciated his motives. She mentioned what had been related to her, to Mr. Johnson, at their next interview.

He appeared greatly hurt that such unjust suspicions, as he termed them, should be cherished by one from whom he expected better things; and assured her that he had been misjudged by her friends, offering to refer her to those in the community to whom his character was well known, and upon whose veracity she might depend.

As the feelings of this unfortunate lady were strongly enlisted in favor of the gentleman, it was not strange that her judgment should be warped, and she led to credit all he said. She was united to him in marriage; and, judging by her first happy connection, anticipated again enjoying the same confidence and sympathy which she had been favored with in early life. But bitter was her disappoint-

ment, and vain the regrets she afterwards felt, when convinced of the unfortunate mistake she had made.

Not more than six months had passed away after she became the wife of Mr. Johnson, ere she was obliged to endure the mortification of seeing him come home in a state of intoxication. At first she could hardly credit the evidence of her senses; and, when forced to do so, felt irritated and provoked. She gave utterance to her indignation in severe reproaches, without stopping to reflect that the effect of doing so might be extremely injurious not only to her own future peace of mind, but to the well-being of him whom she was in duty bound to endeavor to reclaim, by kindness and affection.

Mrs. Johnson had never, as we have before hinted, been accustomed to bear patiently anything that did violence to her natural feelings. Her first companion had been one of the most indulgent of husbands, and she was illy prepared to endure the severe test to which her regard for him to whom she was now united, had been subjected.

She had naturally a great aversion to those who had been so weak as to be overtaken by the sin of steeping their senses in alcoholic drink; and now, to be forced to admit the unwelcome truth that *her* husband was a drunkard, was more than she could endure. Her proud heart rebelled, while it throbbed with keenest anguish, at the thought of what she had brought upon herself, by acting contrary to the advice of her friends.

Mr. Johnson had never, until the day on which his easily besetting sin was first exposed to his hitherto confiding wife, any opportunity of seeing the effect which

trials produced upon her mind; and he had all along fancied her disposition the very reverse of what he now found it to be. He, therefore, notwithstanding the disgrace he had brought upon her, felt somewhat chagrined at the want of forbearance manifested towards him, and continued to keep out of the sight of his wife, as much as possible, for several days after this unhappy occurrence.

This circumstance excited suspicion in the mind of Mrs. Johnson, and made her wretched; and a foundation was thus laid for future misery, early in the wedded life of this couple.

Time passed on, yet the prospects of Mrs. Johnson brightened not, but were rather darkened, by the oft-repeated errors into which her companion fell. A little daughter was added to the family circle; yet this event was only a source of sorrow to its mother, while she reflected that it was heir to disgrace brought upon it by a father's weakness.

As she looked upon the babe, and at the same time beheld the indifference with which it was regarded by its father, her proud feelings rose to resentment, and she did not scruple to censure him for his conduct, in bitter and aggravating terms. The home of Mr. Johnson was often made miserable to all its inmates, by the harsh and unkind feelings evinced by Mr. and Mrs. J. towards each other; and ere three years had rolled by, after their union, he found any place preferable to his own dwelling. He seldom entered his house, except when under the influence of liquor, and it was a relief to his family to have him away.

At length, after the occurrence of a most disgraceful

scene at home, in which Mr. Johnson was the cause of much distress to his wife, while intoxicated, he absconded from the place, and it was not until several months had elapsed, that Mrs. Johnson learned that he was indulging in dissipation in a distant city. At this intelligence, her mortification was great, and she experienced much vexation and grief. So great was her pride, that it prevented her from unbosoming her sorrows to those who would have sympathized with her; and the very fact that she gave no vent to her feelings, increased their violence.

At this juncture in her history, she was called to experience a trial of a different nature from any which had ever before befallen her. Her eldest son having arrived at the age of eighteen, had thus become subject to the militia law of the state, and the country being then at war with Great Britain, he was enrolled among the number of those who had been drafted to join the army.

Mrs. Johnson would gladly have procured his release, and did obtain a substitute, but the ambition of the young man, whose name was Loraine, to distinguish himself in his country's service was so great, that he determined to remain enlisted, even at the expense of his mother's peace of mind. He left home, on some slight pretence, and journeyed to a place in Ontario county, New York, where resided some of his friends. Here he joined the army, and was among the number of those gallant men who took Fort George from the British.

Soon after Loraine became a soldier, he wrote to his mother, informing her of the fact, at the same time saying all he could to encourage her to be cheerful during his absence, and closed by assuring her that as long as he

survived the battles in which he must engage, he should continue to write to her. This letter afforded some consolation to the now doubly afflicted Mrs. Johnson, and she longed for the arrival of another. She looked with the most intense interest and anxiety, for many months, but in vain, until at length, 'Hope deferred made her heart sick,' and she relinquished the idea of ever hearing from him again. Deep was the anguish she endured, on account of this beloved son, and much did she desire to know his fate.

One morning, late in the autumn of 1814, as she was reflecting upon what was probably now the situation of Loraine, she heard some one knock at the door. One of her daughters who was in the room with her, immediately opened it, and in a moment Mrs. Johnson heard her exclaim, 'O! my brother! my brother!'

On hearing this exclamation, her mother almost fainted, and did not recover herself for some time. When she did so, she found her neck encircled by the left arm of her long absent and much loved Loraine, and in an instant discovered that his right was gone. At this sight, she wept bitterly for some minutes, when her son, affected at witnessing her distress, told her, that the time for weeping was past. 'Now dear mother,' continued he, 'has the time for thanksgiving arrived.'

'It has indeed,' exclaimed his mother, 'and I ought to feel grateful that I am permitted again to behold you; yet it distresses me exceedingly to see you deprived of your arm.'

'It is truly a great misfortune to lose such a limb, mother,' replied he, 'yet it is a mere trifle when compared

with what I have seen many endure, in consequence of the war. I stood beside a man on the field of battle, who was killed by the same ball by which I was wounded. We fell together; and after I had fallen, feeling the most excruciating pain, I looked upon my companion in arms, as he lay motionless at my side, and envied him his situation, as he had been instantly killed, while I still lived, as I then felt, but to suffer.

'As soon as practicable,' continued the young man, 'I was removed from the gory bed upon which I lay, and carried to a hospital; my wound was dressed, sooner than I might have expected, considering the number of those who required attention; and every thing was done for me that could be, under the circumstances; yet as the weather was exceedingly warm, my sufferings were most severe.

'On the eighth day after my wounds were dressed, the surgeon informed me that it was necessary my arm should be amputated. I submitted to the operation, and amid the great agony it occasioned, felt supported by the hope that after this was over, I might soon be well. In this, however, I was disappointed; for before the expiration of a week after the first amputation had been performed, the surgeon, one morning, told me that I should be obliged to part with yet another portion of the limb.

'My feelings revolted at the idea, and I implored him to allow me to die as I then was. He said that his duty required him to perform the operation, and I was accordingly obliged to submit to it.

'After my first sufferings were past, he told me that he even now saw but a slight chance of my recovery, and that

I had better, while it was in my power to do so, dictate a letter to you, lest you should never be informed of my fate. I did so; but as you have not received it, I presume it was miscarried. The weather became cooler soon after these occurrences, and to the astonishment of all who saw me, aided by the most simple means, I rapidly regained my health.

'And now, my dear mother, I hope you will forgive my undutiful conduct in leaving home against your wishes. Had I done as you desired, how much suffering should I have escaped.'

His mother, almost overcome by the intensity of her emotions, responded, 'You have long been forgiven, my son. I am overjoyed to see you once more; yet I cannot but be grieved to see you thus maimed, so early in life. O, what misery does war bring upon those who engage in it! When will the time arrive, that men shall "beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks," and the "nations learn war no more?" But you must be weary, my son; we will not, therefore, prolong this conversation, cheering as it is to my heart to be permitted again to hear your voice. Retire now to your chamber, and at some future time we will listen to the further recital of your adventures.'

It was not many weeks after the return of Loraine, before Mrs. Johnson discovered that something preyed upon his spirits; she thought he appeared to make an effort to seem cheerful, whenever he saw that she observed his depression.

Mrs. Johnson did not know exactly the cause of his dejection. He had acquired the habit of writing with his

left hand, and being able to use it almost as readily as he had been his right one, had obtained lucrative employment as clerk in a manufacturing establishment, not far distant from his home. She inferred, therefore, that his depression was occasioned by some other cause than the loss of his arm. She knew that ere he left home to enter upon a military life, he had been greatly interested in a young lady, of an age near his own, who was a grand-daughter of the late Mr. Weldron. Loraine was much attached to this relative, whose name was Fanny; yet she appeared regardless of his feelings, and treated him with all the heartlessness of a real coquette.

His mother felt confident that had the influence of this individual been exerted over the mind of her son for good, he would never have pursued the course which had been attended with such unfortunate results as had his volunteering to fight for his country. She feared, though he had not seen Fanny since his return, that a remembrance of the past cast a shade of gloom over his mind. In this, however, she was mistaken; as she soon learned from the effects of a letter which he received from the place where he last enrolled his name as a soldier.

The letter was written by a gentleman, who was the father of a young lady, to whom he had engaged himself to be united in wedlock, ere he went to engage in scenes of war. He had visited her while on the way to his mother, and knew that, although he was changed in person, her feelings towards him remained the same as they were when he last saw her, at their sad parting. While with her, on his return, his emotions were mingled and various. He was ardently attached to this interesting

young person; yet he felt embarrassed in regard to speaking upon the subject of their union, now that he had become a cripple, and resolved to remain silent in reference to it, unless it should first be introduced by the father of Eliza.

As he was anxious to behold his mother again, he did not tarry long with these friends, at this time, but hastened home. Not one word in reference to his engagement with Eliza had been spoken by her father, during his visit; and he feared that pride would prevent his consenting to receive a person into his family, situated as he then was. No wonder, then, when he broke the seal of this letter, and perceived that it had been written in a spirit of kindness, by Eliza's father, that his mind was at once relieved of the burden of anxiety which had for sometime oppressed it.

The old gentleman expressed a desire that he should return to N—— as soon as he could, consistently, and informed him that he was as willing, now, to have Eliza become his bride, as he was before the occurrence of his misfortune. Loraine did not need urging to the discharge of the duty he owed his much-loved Eliza, and made preparations to return to her immediately.

His mother grieved at the idea of another separation; still she was glad that the mind of her son had risen superior to the baneful influence which the attractive, yet indiscreet Fanny had once exerted over him; and when he left her she was consoled by the reflection that he was not now to be afloat upon the wide world, without a friend to confide in, but was soon to settle in life with a woman whose influence over him would be good.

CHAPTER VI.

Fanny Rice — Coquetry — Clandestine Marriage — Lost Mother — Lonely Anna.

ANTICIPATING the desire of some of our readers to know something more of Fanny, we shall here give a sketch of her history. Dark is the picture presented when crime is portrayed in the character of the sterner sex; but a darker shade overspreads it when woman — she who ought to exert her influence over man on the side of morality and religion — becomes guilty and degraded.

Such a portrait is placed before the reader in the character of Fanny Rice.

She was the eldest daughter of parents who prided themselves in training her so that she might become an object of attraction among the fashionable and genteel. They taught her to regard the letter of the moral law (though themselves understood not its spirit), and wished her to obey its precepts. By undue indulgence, they early sowed the seeds of pride and vanity in the mind of Fanny, yet seemed unconscious of the mournful fact.

Fanny was not exquisitely beautiful, though she was fair to look upon. The expression of her countenance was amiable, and intelligent, and full of vivacity. Her form was slender, yet well proportioned. She knew that she

was considered handsome, yet this knowledge did not excite her vanity.

When arrived at an age to admit of her appearing in the ball-room, and in other circles of fashion, her company was constantly courted by the gay, while her wit and good humor made her popular with all. She loved notice, and too often sought to gain it at the expense of the feelings of others.

Fanny was strongly disposed to coquetry. Her mother greatly deprecated this trait in her character; and warned her against its indulgence. Her warning, however, was unheeded by the giddy girl, who fancied that she could do, with impunity, what had brought upon others wretchedness untold.

She gaily danced along, from year to year, in the bewildering maze of vanity and mirth, until she attained the age of nineteen. Among the number who courted her society and smiles, was a young physician, possessed of brilliant talents and highly respectable character, whose name was Dickson. This gentleman was naturally modest and diffident; still, his personal appearance and manners were prepossessing.

Fanny regarded this young gentleman rather favorably, and often allowed him to visit her, and to accompany her to places of amusement. Her feelings towards him, however, were not those of real affection, though she permitted him to think otherwise. Her fondness for conquest led her to conduct herself in such a manner towards him, that he was led to think she loved him sincerely. He offered her his hand in marriage, which she promised to accept, and he considered himself the happiest of the happy, in

prospect of becoming, as he ardently hoped, the husband of her choice.

Fanny, however, was averse to having any special time appointed for their union, and whenever Doctor Dickson alluded to it, replied evasively, and tried to lead his mind to other subjects. The partiality of the confiding man was so great as to warp his judgment. He was blind to her faults, and supposed that shyness and delicacy, rather than a want of interest, induced her reserve, upon a subject that mostly occupied his thoughts.

At the same time that this unstable girl was receiving the addresses of Doctor Dickson, she was visited by another, who was his avowed enemy. The character of this man was dissolute. The mistaken girl was aware of the fact, yet she allowed herself to sit and chat with him for hours; and would sometimes sing for him, and walk and ride with him.

She often said she knew that Mr. Coomer would not do for a husband; and with an unthinking air would add, '*he makes an excellent beau.*' Her mother often chid her for her indiscreet conduct. At such times the daughter invariably became angry, and often told her mother that she was only flirting a little, which she had a right to do if she pleased.

Had the mother studied more the character of her child, and better understood her disposition, she would have been better fitted to reprove her faults; but as it was, she knew but little even of herself. She was proud, ambitious, and extremely passionate. Her feelings in regard to Fanny's unbecoming behavior, savored more of wounded pride than of grief.

Had she, instead of taunting Fanny with her faults, kindly set before her the fearful consequences of the course she was pursuing, she might have been stopped in her career of folly. Instead of this, the daughter was only irritated and provoked by the injudicious manner in which her mother often reproached her; and seldom, if ever, paid any regard to her remonstrances.

The father of Fanny died when she was about fifteen, which was a most unfortunate occurrence for the poor girl. She had ardently loved her father, for he was better qualified to sympathize with her than was her mother. He was what is generally called an easy-tempered man; and it may be added with truth, that as a parent he was exceedingly kind and indulgent. Upon his eldest daughter he doted, and she had reason to feel that by his death she was bereft of her best earthly friend.

Although the misguided girl appeared happy, to the gay throng with which she was surrounded, her heart was not at rest. Her reason taught her that pleasure was not to be found in the way in which she sought it.

At short intervals, she listened to the dictates of her better judgment, and then she would resolve to reform, at least in some respects. But as she had never cultivated any firmness of purpose, she would allow herself to be governed by an impulsive nature, and gratify her present inclination, regardless of the pain it might cause others, and of the future misery it might bring upon herself.

It was this want of reflection, rather than malignity of heart, that led her to trifle with the feelings of Doctor Dickson. For a time he was entirely ignorant of the fact that she was receiving the attentions of any besides him-

self; and when it was kindly hinted to him that such was the case, he could not at first believe it.

When the unwelcome conviction of the fact was forced upon his mind, he mildly told his beloved Fanny what he had heard. She did not fully deny it, yet was unwilling to confess the whole truth. The doctor was so much attached to her, that he would gladly have forgiven her, had she been willing to refrain from further wrong.

With the most tender expressions he warned her against encouraging the attentions of the unprincipled Mr. Coomer; telling her that it was still in her power to make him happy, and at the same time save herself much of the anguish of heart he feared she would experience, in doing otherwise.

Fanny, though her disposition was not bad, in some respects, sometimes yielded to passionate feeling; and when this kind and forbearing friend conversed in this manner with her, she wept most passionately, and accused him of cruelty. She told him he might forsake her society forever, if he chose; and if he was going to be so unreasonable as to debar her from the society of all others, he was welcome to do so.

The doctor vainly endeavored to make the poor deluded girl understand the motives by which he was actuated; but she refused to listen to him, and abruptly left the apartment. Her mother strongly sympathized with Doctor Dickson, whose character she justly estimated and greatly respected; and she evinced the most bitter feelings towards her daughter, which caused her, clandestinely, to quit the home of her mother, and seek shelter with some friends of her departed father.

She did not, however, acquaint these friends with the

circumstances under which she left her home, but led them to suppose she merely came to make them a friendly visit. It was not long ere her friends at home ascertained whither she had gone; and as soon as the generous Dickson knew where she was, he addressed a letter to her, written in a strain of most touching eloquence. He requested, if she still had any regard for him, whom he could not but believe she had once loved, to return to the bosom of her family. He begged her to answer his letter, assuring her that she still possessed his friendship and best wishes.

Strange was the fact, yet fact it was, that Doctor Dickson still loved this erring one, ingrate as she had proved. She was deaf, however, to his entreaties, and noticed not his letter, except to deride it.

After the lapse of several weeks, and much importunity on the part of her mother, whose feelings had become somewhat softened towards her, she returned home. During her absence, she had attracted the admiration of a Mr. Wilcot, a gentleman possessed of great wealth, and a pleasing address, but many years her senior.

Fanny, whose feelings were alive upon the subject, was not long in ascertaining the fact, that this gentleman was becoming attached to her; and her long indulged vanity was greatly gratified by the thought, that she could now exult, triumphantly, over the less pretending, though far more worthy, Doctor Dickson.

After her return home, whenever she chanced to meet this amiable young gentleman, she treated him with marked contempt, and he was obliged, at length, to resign her to her own chosen way. He did so, and communicated to her, in a letter, his feelings in regard to her, and a kind

and final farewell. The epistle, which would have done honor to the ablest writer, was treated with as much scorn as was his former communication.

Doctor Dickson felt that the hopes he had once fondly cherished, were sadly blighted; yet he stood firm in the integrity of his heart, sustained by that power which never fails to support those who rely upon it for strength in the fulfilment of duty.

Poor Fanny, who lived upon excitement, appeared to enjoy, for a while, the flattering notice of Mr. Wilcot. She felt no affection for him, yet as he was affluent and handsome, she was proud of being escorted by him to places of public amusement, where, if she was aware of being seen by Doctor Dickson, her triumph was complete.

After a few months' acquaintance with Mr. Wilcot, she again secretly left her home, and went with him to an adjoining state, where she became his wife. Soon after this event took place, she returned home and presented her mother, whom she well knew disapproved of her intimate acquaintance with Mr. Wilcot, a certificate of their marriage.

Her mother said not a word, being well-nigh choked with various and mingled emotions. Maternal feelings, anger, hope, fear, and distrust, strongly conflicted in her bosom. At length, however, natural affection triumphed and, spite of her daughter's departure from the path of duty, she determined to treat her kindly. To this determination she ever after adhered, and Fanny, who had sometimes doubted her affection for her, was somewhat reassured of her love.

At the expiration of a year after she was married, Mrs

Wilcot was made the mother of a little son. She still rolled in affluence and splendor, and the future presented a dazzling prospect before her. Another, and another year passed by, much as the first had gone, at the end of which time a little daughter was given her. Shortly after this event took place, her friends often perceived an expression of sadness upon her countenance, and not unfrequently surprised her when bathed in tears; still, as she was always silent upon the subject, none ventured to ask her the cause of her anxiety. Her servants knew that her husband spent most of his nights from home; with this they acquainted her friends, who had strongly suspected, from what they had before learned, that he spent much of his time in billiard rooms.

It was not long before these suspicions were confirmed; for, risking large sums while at play one night, he lost many thousands of dollars. He continued playing, as too many do, with the hope of retrieving his losses, until he was obliged, by his continued failures, to mortgage much of his real estate.

When this fact became known, the mortification of his wife was very great. As has been before hinted, she had not much affection for her husband; but consented to a union with him merely for the sake of being enabled, by his wealth, to gratify her foolish fondness for display.

Gloomy, indeed, were the nights to her on which she was obliged to sit alone until almost morning, or retire, with her mind burdened with feverish anxiety, to a bed that failed to yield her exhausted frame the repose it needed. It was on one of these fatal nights that her husband, returning a little past midnight, found her whom,

notwithstanding his proneness to vice, he still tenderly regarded, bathed in tears.

She sat near the bed on which lay asleep their innocent unconscious babes. As their father approached her, and in a kind tone asked the cause of her depression, she was silent, but cast on him a glance, half-sorrowful, half-reproachful. He felt its meaning, and strove to animate her spirits by cheerful conversation.

She accused him of gaming, and told him what she had heard respecting his loss of property. He admitted that it was partly true, but ended with saying, 'I have recently been very successful at play, and hope soon, not only to recover what I have lost, but to win much more.'

He then descended the stairs, and entering the dining-room, took from the side-board a decanter of wine, and some glasses, which he carried to his chamber and placing them upon the table, said gaily to her, 'Let us drown our sadness in a glass of wine.' This she at first declined, yet soon allowed herself to yield to the persuasion of her husband. At first, she slowly sipped but part of a glass, but soon drank the remainder, with a keener relish. It was not long ere she felt its exhilarating effects upon her spirits, and became cheerful and animated under its influence.

Her husband, pleased with her lively manner, knowing full well the cause, yet considering not the fatal consequences, urged her to take another glass. It required less persuasion to induce her to drink the second time than it had done the first; but the second draught somewhat bewildered her senses, so that she retired to rest soon after, and slept soundly until late the next morning.

In the morning, feeling the reaction of the excessive excitement of the previous night, she resorted to the wine-cup for relief. This practice she continued, day after day, feeling glad, if by any means she could drown unpleasant reflection. Her friends were pleased to perceive that she seemed to have recovered even more than her wonted cheerfulness, yet dreamed not that the intoxicating cup had caused the exhilaration of her spirits.

The state of Mr. Wilcot's affairs grew worse and worse, yet the mother of his wife was cheered by the thought that her daughter was then seldom if ever depressed under her trials. But alas! she was again soon called to mourn over the derelictions of her unprincipled child.

The cause of Mrs. Wilcot's temporary excitement soon became known to her domestics, who frequently saw her at the side-board, and not unfrequently surprised her while drinking deeply of the fatal cup. This truth, unwelcome as it was, soon reached the ears of her mother. With tears of bitter anguish she expostulated with Mrs. Wilcot; and urged her by all the motives that could be drawn from heaven, earth, and the world of final despair, never again to touch that cup, which had proved fatal to so many before her. She pictured, in glowing colors, the misery and disgrace that would soon be brought upon her children, if she paused not in her mad career.

Mrs. Wilcot, as on previous occasions, heeded not the admonition of this afflicted parent, who she felt occasioned herself unnecessary sorrow on her account. She told her mother that she need not distress herself about her, for she was capable of acting on her own responsibility, and that she drank wine because she considered it conducive

to her health, adding, 'I do not drink because I love its taste; and while that is the case there is no danger of my acquiring a habit of excessive drinking.'

In vain did her mother tell her that drinking at all, when in health, was drinking excessively. She was deaf to all her remonstrances; and, with a bleeding heart, this widowed mother was obliged, in silence, to watch the gradual descent of her daughter from the enviable station she had once enjoyed in society, to the lowest depths of vice and degradation.

Mr. Wilcot continued to follow the pernicious practice of gaming, until he was reduced to bankruptcy; and Mrs. Wilcot was obliged to quit the elegant mansion where she had for several years resided, and take up her abode in a small tenement, hired by her husband. This circumstance overwhelmed her with mortification and grief, which she strove to forget by plunging deeper and deeper in crime.

As their slender finances no longer afforded her wine, she found a substitute in the poisonous beverage in the manufacture of which is wasted so many millions of bushels of the rich produce of this fair earth, which our benevolent Creator intended for the support of man. As soon as her little boy could speak so as to be understood, she sent him almost daily to one of those despicable places where many a child has been made worse than an orphan.

Her little son was taught to ask for gin, which was sold him by the mercenary bar-keeper, notwithstanding the mother of Mrs. Wilcot conjured him, by all he held dear and sacred, not to do so. The poor little Edwin was compelled to procure the intoxicating draught for his miserable mother, until he was old enough to feel ashamed of being

seen by his school-mates carrying a bottle of gin which he knew they understood was for her.

Often, while very young, did this poor child blush with shame, when taunted by his unfeeling playmates, with the disgraceful conduct of his mother. He would often weep bitterly when thus assailed, and say, 'My father says my mother did not always do so; that she was once a good mother, but wine has ruined her.' 'O, I wish,' said the little innocent, 'my mother had never drank wine.'

Mrs. Wilcot was kind to her family, when not under the influence of liquor; and even when intoxicated, she was not cross and abusive, though she shamefully neglected her children; and when she could not, by other means, procure spirit, she would pawn any article of furniture or clothing to get it. As her children became older, and saw their mother become more and more abandoned, while their father almost entirely left his home and family, they felt that they were indeed friendless.

It was true their grandmother sympathized with them, as far as she was able; but they felt that she did not really understand their feelings; and she often wounded them deeply by saying, that she expected the children of such parents to become gamblers and drunkards. Edwin would get very angry with his grandmother, and answer her in an unbecoming tone, to which she would again respond.

The little fellow would then turn from her house, with a feeling of disgust, and, as he would look into his own miserable home, where his wretched mother would lie for hours unconscious of anything that took place, he would think within himself, where shall I go — there is nothing in this wide world for me but misery — O how I wish I

was dead, or had never been born! Unfortunate youth! He had never been permitted to attend a sabbath school; and though his intellect had not been left entirely uncultivated, he seemed almost as ignorant of the precepts of the Christian religion as a heathen. No wonder, that, surrounded with such an influence, he, almost imperceptibly to himself, was early drawn into that vortex of dissipation and folly that had well-nigh destroyed his parents.

Edwin loved his sister, who was two years younger than himself, and could he have been kept from the company of the vicious, with whom he associated abroad, her influence over him would have been good. Anna was a lovely girl; and her pitiable situation, added to her lovely appearance, early gained for her the sympathy and friendship of a pious lady, who lived in a neighborhood where her parents, for a few months, resided.

This lady had been in the habit of inviting Anna, even while a little girl, to come to her house frequently; the helpless one had gladly accepted the invitation of the kind-hearted lady, and, by thus being often in her society, had become greatly attached to her. This lady improved every opportunity of impressing upon the mind of Anna a sense of her obligations to perform her duty towards her parents, though they understood not their obligations to her.

She encouraged her to think that if she did well herself, she might not only be respected in this life, but be happy in eternity, even though she was the daughter of parents who disregarded the claims of virtue. 'Act well your own part,' she would say to Anna, 'looking unto Him who is able to help you, and you need not fear. If

you do this, it may ever be your happy privilege to feel that He who is with you is stronger than those who would lead you in the pathway of sin and death.'

The admonitions of this kind friend were not lost upon the gentle and teachable girl. Anna constantly endeavored to be patient and forbearing towards her misguided parents, and strove as much as possible to conceal their faults. To her mother she was indeed a most dutiful daughter. As soon as she was old enough she learned a trade, at which she steadily worked, and was thus enabled to support herself, besides assisting her mistaken friends.

It was a severe trial to the poor girl, to be obliged to witness the degradation of her who gave her birth. The most stoical heart could not fail of being affected while gazing upon the tall interesting figure of Anna, as she often stood bending over the bloated and loathsome person of her mother, while lying in a state of intoxication. On such occasions, her pale countenance would sometimes glow with honest indignation; yet oftener it expressed a feeling of deep and heartfelt sorrow.

Once, after Mrs. Wilcot had refrained from the indulgence of her woful habit for some weeks, her daughter felt quite encouraged to hope that she might reform and become a comfort to her family. The thought that she should ever enjoy so great a blessing as this, was a cordial to her heart. Soon, alas! the fondly cherished hopes of this poor girl were disappointed, for, upon rising one morning, she discovered, to her great dismay, that her mother had left the house during the night, and had taken with her all her clothes.

Anna could not conjecture whither she had gone, and her feelings amounted almost to agony. She made every possible search for the unhappy woman, yet she was no where to be found. More than a fortnight elapsed before Anna heard anything respecting her, when tidings came, indirectly, that she, who had once been a magnet of attraction in refined and fashionable society, was lying degraded and lost to virtue and morality, and to every finer feeling of the soul, in a house of infamy. Thither Anna went, accompanied by the pious friend to whom alone she unbosomed her grief, and found her wretched mother in a most deplorable condition.

Her weeping daughter vainly urged her to return to their home. To her entreaties she only replied by uttering the most horrid imprecations upon her mother, her husband, her children, and herself. She said she could not live without stimulating drinks, and that the presence of her virtuous friends tortured her to such a degree that she had determined to leave them forever. She firmly kept this resolution, and no arguments could prevail upon her to return again to her home, or see her friends.

Anna went to the house of her friend, who kindly offered her a home, which she accepted with thankfulness, and remained with her more than a year. She was then married to a gentleman of excellent character, and was settled in life with the pleasing prospect of living to be a happy and useful member of society.

Her poor brother followed in the footsteps of his parents, and early filled a drunkard's grave.

Her deluded father died in a fit, while sitting in a billiard saloon.

The lost and degraded wife and mother, after being the means of hurrying her only parent with sorrow to the grave, left the region where she was known, and was never heard of more.

CHAPTER VII.

Divorcement and Marriage — Benjamin — Lucy — Mr. Otis — Affliction.

BENJAMIN, the second son of Mrs. Johnson, was a youth of peculiar promise, the very reverse of his brother in disposition; for he was mild and amiable, and, instead of being desirous of distinguishing himself by warlike deeds, like Loraine, he choose the retirement of home, as it afforded him opportunities of cultivating his intellect, which was the object of his highest ambition.

His mother doted upon him, and fondly expected to be blest with the society of this dear son, often expressing the satisfaction afforded her by the reflection that his taste was of that kind which would cause him to be contented in the pursuit of such avocations as would enable him to remain near home. In this, however, she was painfully disappointed; and her heart pierced even more deeply by the neglect of this favorite child, than it had been by the perverseness of Loraine.

Mrs. Johnson, we have told our readers, was not a Christian. She waited not on a covenant-keeping God, by prayer, and the faithful study of His word, to learn what her duty was, ere she ventured to act; but was governed almost entirely by the impulse of inclination. The influ-

ence she exerted over her children was calculated to lead them to pursue a similar course. She had always had her wishes gratified, as far as possible, even at the sacrifice of others' comfort, and found it impossible to subdue the will of her children, while they were constantly surrounded by such adverse influences.

After Mr. Johnson had been absent from his family long enough to enable his wife to avail herself of his absence in procuring a bill of divorce, she determined to do so, at all hazards. Her friends expostulated with her upon the rashness of such a step, although it was evident to all that she had little if any regard for him.

A lady with whom she was very intimate, and towards whom she had never felt any reserve, ventured, on this occasion, to paint, in glowing colors, the misery she might cause her husband, in separating her destiny from his. Being somewhat acquainted with the disposition of the individual, she felt encouraged to hope that gentleness and forbearance, on the part of Mrs. Johnson, would result in his reformation. She kindly told Mrs. Johnson so; and implored her, by all the motives that might be expected to influence a wife and mother, to reflect long upon this subject, ere she should perform an act which might be the ruin of another.

Mrs. Johnson replied to her friend's counsel, by saying, 'I *have* thought long upon the subject, and it does no good to reflect continually that the person I was once united to in marriage is a drunkard; I always did abominate such a character, and it is of no avail to try to reform such an one.'

'But my dear Mrs. Johnson,' continued her friend,

'Mr. J—— is not a confirmed inebriate, you know, and there is no reason to despair of his forsaking this course of folly. He only resorts to the exhilarating draught when his spirits are depressed. He has little fortitude to enable him to endure the various perplexities which attend us in our pathway through life, and needs cheering and encouraging. O! I cannot give him up yet, I must intercede for him not only with you, who have it in your power, I think, to reclaim the wanderer, but also with that God who has all hearts in His hand, and is able to accomplish all things.'

Mrs. Johnson was unmoved by all that her friend could say in regard to freeing herself from her companion. She had decided, and remained firm to her purpose of procuring a divorce. This was easily accomplished, and Mrs. Johnson rejoiced in the idea that now if he ever came near her, she could tell him he was no longer allied to her.

Soon after this transpired, this unfortunate lady was introduced to a gentleman of highly respectable character, and accomplished exterior. He was considered very handsome and genteel, and his presence was always welcome in the circle of the polite and fashionable.

He was very much pleased with Mrs. J——, and very soon after their first introduction, requested permission to visit her. This was readily granted by the lady, and in a short time he became a frequent visiter at her house. No one, however, ever dreamed that he had an idea of marrying Mrs. Johnson, until it was announced that they intended marriage.

The children of Mrs. Johnson felt mortified at the step

which their mother had taken. Loraine was absent, and did not know of it until some time after they were united; for married they would be, in spite of all remonstrances on the part of friends interested for both parties. It was justly feared that the most unpleasant consequences might follow a union of two persons where existed so great a disparity in years, as there was between Mr. Nelson and Mrs. Johnson.

Benjamin declared that he could never brook the contemptuous inuendoes of those whose ill-breeding led them to sneer at the subject of his mother's unwise marriage, in his presence, as he was often forced to, and therefore he intended leaving the place, and seeking some spot where he should never again be annoyed by the unwelcome subject.

Mrs. Nelson, as we must hereafter call this lady, entreated her son to remain near her. She mourned at the thought of a separation from him whom she had ever trusted, confidently, would have remained near to solace her by assisting in taking care of her children, and by superintending their education. But all she could say to Benjamin was in vain. He told her he regretted having been banished as it were from his home; but he never could nor would be obliged to come in contact with a person for whom he entertained so little respect as he did for Mr. Nelson. He was aware that no sin had been committed, he said, yet felt that his mother had acted foolishly, and brought reproach upon her family, in the minds of the most of her acquaintance; and added, 'I am resolved to leave the scene of mortification as soon as pos-

sible.' He did so; and his mother could not but regret that in this instance she had not listened to the advice of those who were qualified to counsel her.

She became dejected, and as year after year passed, and Benjamin expressed no intention of returning, she could not forgive herself for the evil she had done. She did not sink, however, under the weight of self-reproach she endured, but was supported by the counsels of Christian friends, who felt that although she had erred, she was still entitled to the sympathy of such as could lead her thoughts above this fascinating and sinful world.

One such friend Mrs. Nelson possessed, in a lady who had been early left a widow, and could in many respects sympathise with her. This lady had a daughter named Lucy, who was a companion of Salina, the daughter of Mrs. Nelson, and they had often conversed together concerning the similarity in the dispositions of her and Benjamin.

No event could have been so productive of happiness to Benjamin's mother as the union of her son with a young lady possessing a character like Lucy's. And as we think it would be refreshing to the mind of the reader to dwell upon what is lovely in the moral world, for a short time at least, we shall give the history of Lucy, as she was closely connected with the Weldron family. What we relate respecting her was told us by an aged relative of the young lady.

Said this friend, 'I love in fancy to revisit those scenes with which a recollection of this amiable lady is associated.

'From her earliest infancy she was lovely, a child of the fairest promise. Well do I remember the thrilling

expression of her dark, blue eyes, and that sweet smile which ever beamed from her serene countenance.

'Her complexion was fair, and her cheek resembled the lovely tint of the blushing rose. Her hair, which was of a light brown, grew in great luxuriance, and hung in glossy ringlets around a forehead of snowy whiteness. Her slender form was faultless, to which a charm was lent by the gracefulness of all her motions, which attracted the admiring gaze of all who beheld her. Yet, strange as it may appear, with all these charms, she was unconscious of her beauty, and vanity seemed to have no lodgment in her heart.

'Her personal attractions but reflected the exquisite sweetness of her gentle soul. Rarely do we meet with one whose character portrays so much meekness and humility. Lucy was the eldest daughter of parents who strove to impress upon her mind a sense of the superiority of mental and moral worth, when compared with mere external loveliness. Nor were their attempts unsuccessful, for they ever regarded their beloved Lucy as a most dutiful child.

'Lucy's father died before she had attained the age of twelve years. Her mother was left with six children, of which the oldest was a son of fourteen. This amiable girl, though she greatly mourned the loss of her dear father, tried by every means in her power to alleviate the sorrow of her widowed mother, who was left in the most delicate state of health, with the pecuniary affairs of her lamented husband in a perplexed condition.

'Lucy, with a maturity of judgment surprising to all, studied, from day to day, how she might most lighten the

burden of her mother's cares. She was ever mindful of the wants of the younger children, to whom she paid every attention, in order to keep them as much as possible from annoying their mother.

'A few months after the death of Lucy's father, a little sister was born, which added greatly to the interest of the family circle — an event that called forth traits in the character of Lucy which shone with peculiar lustre. She often mentioned, with tears in her eyes, the sad truth, that little Mary, as she was called, could never see her father; and in the most sympathizing tone would say, "Poor little thing, we must all be very kind to you."

'After the affairs of her father were settled, his property being barely sufficient to pay the demands against him, Lucy's mother was obliged to do something for the support of herself and children. When this lady first became aware of the change in her prospects, in a pecuniary point of view, the despondency of her feelings was great. It was then that the affectionate Lucy seemed doubly dear to the fond heart of her remaining parent.

'Whenever she chanced to find her mother in tears, she earnestly sought to comfort her, and would say, in a most winning tone, 'Mother, do not weep, we shall get along nicely; you know I love to work, and can do a great deal for you; I can take almost all the care of little sister, so that you can do whatever you please.'

"Her mother, often greatly affected by the tenderness of feeling evinced by her youthful daughter, could not but feel, though greatly afflicted, that one choice blessing had in mercy been spared to her. The sympathy of her lovely

daughter assuaged the anguish of many a pang that rent her heart.

'As time passed on, and the health of Lucy's mother seemed to decline, under constant application to sedentary employments she felt it her duty to abandon the idea of procuring a livelihood with her needle, and knew not what to do. Said she, one day, in presence of Lucy, to a friend, "If I had some one with whom I could entrust the care of my family, for a few weeks at a time, I could go from home, for a while, to take care of the sick, in the circle of my acquaintance. Trying as this would be to my natural feelings, I think it is my duty, rather than longer to pursue a less active employment."

'When Lucy was again left alone with her mother, she said, with a sweet smile, at the same time putting her arm around her mother's neck and kissing her, "Mother, you need not stay at home for want of some one to take care of the children. If you think it best to go from home, and will trust me, I can take care of them. My brothers, I know, will be good boys, and help me take care of little sister, and do the work."

'Her mother was quite overcome by this unexpected proof of the strength of her daughter's filial affection. She tenderly folded her to her throbbing heart, and kissing her, said, "My child, I fear your strength would soon prove unequal to a task so hard."

'"O, try me, mother," said Lucy, "perhaps I can do better than you think; when the children are well, I can see to them, I know; and if they are sick, I can send word to you."

'The mother of Lucy felt that she was indeed worthy

of confidence, yet she dreaded to overtax her strength, knowing full well that her ambition would lead her to attempt more than she could accomplish. At length, however, after much importunity, on the part of Lucy, her mother consented to leave her with the care of the family, and, with a trembling heart, left her home to take up her residence, for a short season, beneath another's roof.

'"My feelings on this occasion," said the afflicted woman, "were extremely painful. When I first laid down to rest at night, away from my children, my emotions were too intense to allow me to sleep; yet as day after day passed away, and my considerate Lucy informed me, daily, that all was doing at home as well as I could wish, I was constrained cheerfully to acknowledge the goodness of that Providence, which deigned to bestow upon me such a daughter as Lucy. At my return, after my first absence from home, I found every thing in better order, even than I could have expected."

'Lucy felt grateful for the merited praise bestowed upon her by her mother, and her mother felt encouraged again to leave her to manage the affairs at home. This sweet girl exerted a most happy influence over the family during the absence of her mother. Her mild, persuasive manner towards her brothers, deterred them from disobeying the commands of their mother, while separated from her, and at the same time led them to pay Lucy almost as much deference as they did their beloved parent. Her younger brothers loved her, as they often said, "*very dearly*," while her eldest one regarded his sister, not only with affection, but also with respect. Her virtues were often the theme of his conversation, and, combined with her beauty, were ever his boast.

'As Lucy's charms ripened into womanhood, they acquired more grace and loveliness. In the social circle she was always the centre of attraction; still she was always modest and unassuming in her demeanor. It was evident that she courted not applause, but rather shrunk from being made an object of particular attention in company.

'I cannot say that Lucy was never an object of envy to any of the young ladies with whom she associated; for in the circle in which she moved, there were, as are found too often in society, narrow minds which could not bear to see another admired for qualities of which they were conscious of being destitute themselves. Sometimes the feelings of the amiable girl were wounded by the rudeness of such as were incapable of appreciating her value; and their coarse expressions would cause the unbidden tear to start. Oftener, however, would a feeling of sorrow heave her bosom, that there were those even in what is called good society, who scruple not to injure the feelings and even the reputation of others, if, by that means, they may obtain that degree of notice for which they are ambitious. To those of this character the gentle girl at all times manifested a spirit of meekness and forbearance, which caused even the malignant to acknowledge, in their own hearts at least, that she was entitled to more than ordinary respect.

'When about seventeen, Lucy was one evening, while at the house of a friend, introduced to James Otis, a young gentleman, who, at that time, stood first in the opinion of many young ladies among her acquaintance, most of whom felt proud of receiving even trifling attention from one so much admired. James had never seen Lucy until that evening; and it was evident to all present that he was

much pleased with her appearance, as he availed himself of every opportunity that presented, during the evening, to converse with her.

'Charles, the eldest brother of Lucy, who was somewhat acquainted with James, was far from being displeased with the partiality he evinced towards her; and, from what he knew of his character, felt that his sister need not be cautioned against receiving his attention.

'After James had seen Lucy, he seemed more than ever solicitous to cultivate an intimate acquaintance with her brother. This he was enabled to do, for he was regarded by Charles worthy of his friendship, being not only possessed of native talents, but of a soul noble and generous, and a mind that had received more than an ordinary degree of cultivation.

'Lucy was a young lady, who, as the poet has said,

> "———— would be wooed,
> And not unsought, be won."

As James became acquainted with her, by frequently spending evenings in her society, in the social circle, he was led to regard, with a feeling of admiration, her retiring and unpretending manners. He saw in her, traits of character which he had ever thought desirable in one with whom he should be united in wedlock. "Truly," said he to himself, "Lucy is exactly my idea of a wife; I think I could not fail to be happy with such a companion." In the mean time, however, James felt doubtful of gaining the affections of one for whom he was beginning to cherish a most ardent attachment. He knew it was not vanity in him to think he was not disagreeable to Lucy; yet he

feared that he might have found a rival in one of the many who courted her society.

'Soon, however, the anxiety of his mind was relieved. An opportunity was afforded him of learning from Lucy the state of her feelings towards him. Calling one evening at the house of her mother, where his intimacy with Charles had caused him to become a frequent visitor, he found Lucy sitting alone in the parlor.

'She received him with her wonted ease and cordiality. He was glad to find her alone, for he was resolved to make known to her his feelings. He could not, however, help feeling somewhat embarrassed. Lucy was quick to perceive that his appearance was unusual. She thought, from the grave expression of his countenance, that something unpleasant had befallen him.

'In a kindly tone she told him she hoped no event had occurred to depress his spirits. This remark opened the way for him, with frankness, to confess what had been passing in his mind respecting her. She listened with deep emotion, until he ceased speaking, then candidly owned that her feelings were strongly interested in his favor. To the question, if she was willing to become his partner for life, she replied without hesitation, "I am, with the consent of my mother."

'This reply rendered her doubly dear to James, who had ever been delighted at beholding her dutiful conduct towards this widowed parent. It hardly need be said that the consent of the affectionate girl's mother to a union with James was freely given.

'The friends of Lucy heartily congratulated her upon the pleasing prospect afforded by her anticipated marriage.

Very many who had known her during the period of her mother's trials, and had witnessed her devotion to the family, could not but feel that the day on which the destinies of this young couple were to be united, would be an auspicious one to James.

'His friends, and he had many, greatly rejoiced in view of this event. Though Lucy possessed not wealth, they felt that her virtues were a treasure which in the scale of domestic happiness would far outweigh glittering gold.

'James was not very rich, yet he was enterprising and persevering, and by his exertions had been enabled to procure a handsome income, out of which he had laid aside sufficient to admit of his placing his beloved Lucy, at their marriage, in a situation which she was well calculated to adorn.

'The morning on which the young couple were married, was delightful. Nature seemed to smile approvingly upon them. It was in the beautiful month of June, when each gentle zephyr that blows seems to waft odors to regale the spirits of mortals, and lead their thoughts "from nature up to nature's God."

'Lucy remarked that it was just such a morning as she would have chosen; and as she gazed in silent admiration upon the pleasing harmony in nature's "handy work," she thought it a sweet emblem of a bosom in which every unhallowed passion is hushed to repose. Her own feelings deeply sympathized with the exquisite loveliness of the natural world on that eventful day, and her spirit was refreshed and elevated by lingering long in sacred contemplation just at the hour when her long cherished

anticipations of earthly happiness were about to be realized.

'The natural ardor of her youthful heart was sweetly subdued, and that heart early chastened by having been called to taste of sorrow's cup. On the day that she was indissolubly united to him to whom she had before plighted her willing heart, she was happy—yes, happy as mortal on earth should be made. She was not one of those who mar the pleasure of a pleasant hour by gloomy forebodings of future evil.

'After the venerable "man of God," whom Lucy from early infancy had been taught to regard as one "by God's own hand anointed," had pronounced James and herself, "husband and wife," and prayed that the divine blessing might rest upon them, a thrilling sensation of delight pervaded the circle of dear friends who had assembled to rejoice with Lucy on her bridal day. Never did mortal experience a greater degree of happiness than did the fond husband of this lovely girl, when, on the evening after the wedding, he introduced her to the dwelling which was to be her future home, and in prospect,

"To him the paradise of earth;"

for the presence of his gentle wife threw a charm around that endeared spot.

'Happy days and weeks sweetly glided away, leaving them in the peaceful enjoyment of Heaven's richest blessings. The sun of prosperity shone brightly upon them, and as Mrs. Otis basked in its noon-day effulgence, her character exhibited the same humility and meekness that had won for her the love of many, under trials severe. Her pitying heart went out towards the sorrowing and distressed, whose woes she delighted to relieve. A friend

of the friendless, was this excellent woman; and never did the needy turn from her door unpitied or unaided.

'As time passed, and the home of this amiable pair was invaded by sorrow, Lucy was ever the same,—lovely and unobtrusive, as when in childhood the lustre of her character first shone. When called, for a long season, to watch beside the bed on which lay racked with pain him in whom her hopes of earthly bliss were centered, her husband felt that she was indeed a ministering angel, lent by kind Heaven to alleviate his sufferings.

'The mild accents of her voice were music to his ear. The soft touch of her gentle hand, as she bathed his feverish brow, and the noiseless tread with which she moved about his sick chamber, supplying the many little wants which affection alone could anticipate, made him more sensible than ever of her worth.

'The fact that Mrs. Otis appeared always to be governed, in her actions, by a desire to do what was right, rather than to court applause from her fellow-beings, gave an additional grace to her every act. Although she was untiring in the performance of duty, as the nurse of her sick companion, she was not, like many, fearful of being censured as unfeeling, for using means indispensable to the continuance of her own health. Early in the morning of each day, if the weather was suitable, she left James in the care of another, in order to invigorate her wearied frame by a short walk in the open air. By doing so, she was able to preserve her appetite for food, and was the better fitted to endure the labor necessary to be performed in a faithful discharge of duty to the sick.

'As Mr. Otis recovered his health, he could not but

acknowledge, almost enthusiastically, his indebtedness to the efforts of his self-possessed and persevering wife for the returning blessing. His pleasure, however, was abated, as he fancied he saw the naturally delicate appearance of his endeared Lucy increase, from week to week. Her constitution was slender, and she inherited a strong predisposition to consumption from her father, who died of that fatal disease.

'She engaged, however, in the active duties of life almost daily, and seldom, if ever, complained of indisposition. After the illness of her husband, during which her strength had been severely tasked, she sometimes spoke of experiencing a feeling of lassitude, which at times nearly unfitted her for taking care of her children.

'Her friends felt extremely anxious, lest she was destined to sink prematurely into the grave. All means were employed which could be suggested by physicians the most skilful, calculated to enable Mrs. Otis to regain her strength.

'Her doting husband spared no trouble or expense in endeavoring to restore her health. He could not, even for a moment, endure the idea of a separation from her who had been, though only for a few short years, the delight of his eyes and the joy of his affectionate heart; yet as week succeeded week, it was evident that her strength was gradually declining.

'A cough soon came on, accompanied by a slight degree of fever, symptoms which, to the practised eye of her distressed mother, betokened approaching death. At times, however, sweet soothing hope, that treasure lent us to gild our pathway to the tomb, told a flattering tale;

and as her friends were willing to believe what they so much wished to be true, they sometimes thought she might yet live many years to gladden the hearts of the many by whom she was beloved.

'Mrs. Otis thought otherwise. She realized her situation, and calmly looked forward to the time when she should be called to bid adieu to all terrestrial objects. In view of her death, an event shrouded with gloom to her husband and other friends, she would cheerfully say to them, 'Let us not embitter the few weeks we may be favored with the society of each other, by indulging in despondency; but let us rather feel grateful to our Father in Heaven that we have been permitted to enjoy so many very happy seasons together. . Grieve not that I am first summoned from this dear family, but rather rejoice that for the sake of our dear Savior, my sins, as I trust, are all freely pardoned, and I shall soon be permitted to join in the everlasting song of praise to *Him who hath loved me, and washed me from my sins in His blood!*'

'Ever after becoming a mother, Mrs. Otis had fondly hoped she might live to train up her children; still, when she was obliged to feel that she must soon leave them motherless, she said, in the fulness of her soul, '*God's will be done.*' The Lord was pleased, however, to remove her babe by death, some time previous to her dissolution. When she saw death's icy hand upon her darling infant, maternal fondness bade her weep; her tears flowed freely, yet she did not repine, but with a holy confidence went to that sympathizing Friend who wept when on earth over the grave of one beloved. To Him she told her grief.

'Her sorrow thus was hushed, and she enabled to rejoice that she had ever been so blessed as to become the mother of a child, early removed from her embrace to join the high and holy throng above.

'She often looked upon the child that remained, with indescribable tenderness, and remarked, 'If dear little Emily may but live to bless the world, I shall joy to leave her behind me. I have desired, if it be best, that she may be spared to do good; if she may not be destined to exert a good influence, I pray my heavenly Father may soon take her to Himself.' One of these desires she felt confident would be granted, and she sweetly acquiesced in the will of her Father, God.

'Mrs. Otis was confined many months in the room of sickness, but always exhibited a temper of mind that could not fail of hallowing the feelings of all who were permitted to spend even a few hours with her. So grateful and affectionate was she to all who attended her, during her protracted illness, that they felt it to be a great privilege to be allowed to take care of her.

'The dreaded hour drew near which was to remove from her friends one whose presence, even in suffering, cheered and supported them, as they watched beside her couch. At this solemn crisis, the virtues of this lovely woman shone with unearthly lustre; her countenance wore an expression almost angelic, and all around her felt that the chamber of death, from which her emancipated spirit took its upward flight, was not only devoid of gloom, but illumined with radiance celestial.

'"O," said Mrs. Otis, a short time before her purified soul left the frail tenement it inhabited to dwell with kin-

dred spirits in a fairer realm, "*it is sweet to die!* I love to think that I was born to prepare for this hour!"

> "O, who would live alway, away from his God,
> Away from yon Heaven, that blissful abode!"

'To her husband, she bade a most tender and affectionate farewell, saying, "I shall expect to meet you in Heaven—do not disappoint me." She kissed her dear child with much affection. To her widowed mother she expressed the liveliest emotions of love and sympathy, saying, "If I may but meet you in Heaven, I shall love you as I wish."

'When the pale messenger had near arrived, she exclaimed, "Can this be death? O, how bright does eternity appear!" then with a smile of ineffable sweetness, in the words of the poet, added,

> "Short is my passage, short the space
> Between my home and me."

'Soon after, her disembodied soul was escorted by ministering spirits to that rest prepared for those who strive to imitate the example of their heavenly Leader.

'The friends she had left, stood for a while in silent admiration, gazing upon the lovely remains of one too bright to be long beheld by mortal eyes—too fair for earth. Those who loved her, could not but feel, though deeply afflicted, that God, in love, had removed her to Heaven.'

CHAPTER VIII.

Removal — Simon — Legacy — Mr. Oliver and his Aunt — Will altered by stratagem — Simon and his nautical friend — Mrs. Nelson — her visit to Brookfield.

A WANT of fixed moral principle in Mrs. Nelson, tinged almost all her actions with a hue not calculated to please.

After her last marriage, she removed to a place a short distance from that in which she had for some years resided, taking with her two or three, only, of her children. Loraine and Benjamin were abroad at this time; her eldest daughter married, and settled near the town her mother left; and the reader will recollect that when we last spoke of Simon, we left him in Brookfield, with the kind lady who took care of him from infancy. At the time to which we now allude, he was still with her; and remained there until her death, which occurred when the youth was about fourteen years old. At this crisis in the history of Simon, his thoughts very naturally reverted to his mother.

He had only a faint recollection of her, as it had been long since he had seen her; but his foster-mother had conscienciously taught him to regard his only remaining parent with a feeling of reverence becoming a child. Still, this kind and truly christian friend could not but

deeply regret the little apparent interest which his mother had felt for him during the few last years.

She had heard of the ill-timed connection this lady had formed, and lamented it deeply, for it had been her fond desire that Mrs. Nelson should purchase a small farm near her own quiet home, and thither remove with her fatherless children. She had suggested that happy results might be expected from such a course, and sometimes Mrs. Nelson had half resolved to comply with the wishes of this affectionate friend. Still there was one circumstance that operated strongly to deter her from doing what she afterwards regretted having neglected to perform.

It has been hinted, on a preceding page, that Mr. Savage, the beloved father of Mrs. Nelson's eldest children, was heir to a large estate. After the death of this lamented gentleman, there was a mistake made in settling his affairs, in consequence of his estate having been entrusted to an individual who was found to be unworthy of confidence, when it was too late for the afflicted family to profit by the discovery.

The reader is aware, already, that Mrs. Nelson suffered much pecuniary loss in consequence of the long continued sickness of herself and family, soon after the occurrence of this painful event.

It is proper here to state, that the circumstances about to be related, affected greatly the future character of the lady whose family were injured in a temporal point of view, by the selfishness and duplicity of one from whom she expected friendship. We shall here digress, for a while, from continuing the account of Simon, to give the

reader the relation of a transaction which took place about this time.

At the time of Mrs. Nelson's afflictions, a person came to administer consolation to the almost heart-broken widow, by telling her that brighter days awaited her, for he was well aware of the fact that a near relative of the family, who was probably approaching near to death, had made her last will and testament in favor of her and her fatherless little ones.

After being assured that such was really the case, by others, who felt authorized to substantiate the assertion of this gentleman, Mrs. Nelson looked forward to the period when she should not only enjoy a competency of this world's goods (which is all that is desirable), but be possessed of a fortune that would enable her to feel that her children were above the fear of want.

After the death of this relative, which event occurred while Mrs. Nelson remained a widow, her heart sunk within her, on learning that she had been wronged,—wronged too, by the same individual who had endeavored to comfort her by the assurance that if called to experience trials in the loss of those to whom she was ardently attached, yet one affliction she would be exempt from, and that was, anxiety on account of her pecuniary affairs. Yet that same person was the wicked instrument of wronging the widow and the fatherless.

During the protracted illness of Mrs. Nelson's aunt, this gentleman, whose name was Oliver, was unremitting in his attentions towards her. Day after day, and week after week, did he visit her and perform carefully those many nameless little acts, so grateful to the feelings of

a sick person. This relative, (for Mr. Oliver was her nephew, and a cousin of Mrs. Nelson), evinced her gratitude towards him in warm expressions of regard for his future happiness, not only in this world, but in that beyond the skies; at the same time saying she had observed an expression of anxiety of late depicted in his countenance which she regretted to see.

'Will you,' continued she, 'tell me if any thing weighs upon your spirits; or am I mistaken?'

'You are not mistaken, my dear aunt,' replied he; 'my spirits are depressed.'

'Will you reveal to me the cause of this dejection?' asked his friend, in a tone of sympathy.

'If I may confide in you, I will,' answered the other.

'You can do so without reserve,' said the lady, 'and if I can serve you in any way, be assured I shall be glad of an opportunity to do so.'

'It is in your power to benefit me greatly,' responded Mr. Oliver, with a deep drawn sigh; 'still, as you cannot do so without changing your mind in relation to what you have always intended to do for others, I have not courage to tell how you can serve me.'

His aunt did not exactly understand the bearing of his remarks, and begged him to explain their meaning.

Her nephew replied by asking if she had not heard it hinted that he had recently suffered by heavy losses.

'No, indeed, I have not,' answered his aunt; 'then I may safely conjecture that your recent depression has been caused by the embarrassed state of your affairs.'

'You have judged rightly,' said he; 'and I feel glad this news has not reached you before, because I may infer

rom that fact that it has not as yet become very public.'

'So am I,' replied the lady, 'but am sorry you did not ommunicate this important fact ere now.'

'I shrunk from the thought of it,' said this designing nan, 'because I feared it might lead you to regret having eequeathed all your property to the family of Mrs. Savage, my cousin.'

'I have bequeathed it to this fatherless family,' said his unt, in a feeble tone of voice (for she was at this time ery weak, and becoming increasingly so every day), 'because I thought it my duty to do so, supposing they needed t more than any of my friends; I dreamed not that you vould ever require my assistance, or I should have acted lifferently.'

'I suppose it is altogether too late now for you to make ny change in regard to the disposition you have made of our property,' said he.

'It is not,' said his friendly, but deceived relative; I an, even now, alter my will, and will do so, if your affairs re so much embarrassed as to make it more my duty to ssist you than those I had designed to befriend.'

'I am at present in great perplexity;' responded Mr. Oliver, 'and you may be assured that the family you have onsidered so liberally in your bequest, are likely to get long better than I can, without the aid of some friend like ourself.'

'But I had supposed,' replied she, 'that Mr. Savage ad been unfortunate, and his family in danger of being reatly depressed in their pecuniary circumstances.'

'That is a mistake,' said he, 'and I will risk this energetic widow, so far as there is any liability of her becom-

ing poor, as long as it is in her power to manage for herself. You can feel satisfied that she is doing well.'

The weakness of the lady would not allow the conversation to be prolonged; and, confiding implicitly in the statements made by her nephew, she ordered her will to be brought to her, which was accordingly done, and at her instance destroyed. She then, with much difficulty, dictated a new one to be written, whereby she bequeathed the greatest part of her property to Mr. Oliver, and only a small sum to each of the family of Mr. Savage.

After the writing was completed, it was necessary for the lady to sign it with her own hand; yet she was unable to do so without assistance, and Mr. Oliver held her hand steadily while she affixed her signature.

The excitement, produced by the unusual effort she had made on this occasion, greatly prostrated her strength, and she lived but a few days after, during which time she was unable to converse.

The family that experienced this disappointment, in regard to future expectations of independence, so far as money could make them so, were surprised at the conduct of their aunt, yet were ignorant, for many years, of the cause of the change she had manifested towards them.

Ere the reader concludes the perusal of this volume, he will learn something more of the history of the artful Mr. Oliver; at present, his curiosity must be gratified in regard to the destiny of Simon.

This youth was aware of the fact that the name of his mother had been changed the third time, yet he had heard the last repeated so seldom that it had actually escaped his memory; still, he doubted not but by asking for his

brothers and sisters, he might, upon going to Providence, easily find his mother. His friends, and he had many (being an intelligent and lovely youth), all felt gratified at the idea of his going to his mother; and trusted, notwithstanding she had manifested of late so little interest in his welfare, that she was far from feeling indifferent towards him.

Simon was accompanied by a friend the greatest part of the way to Providence, the place where the anxiously expecting young man trusted he should behold his mother, and experience from her that maternal tenderness which he had longed again to enjoy after he had been bereaved of the friend who had been in some respects even more than a mother to him. He parted from his friend at a place about seven miles distant from Providence, where he was obliged to remain sometime, waiting for the arrival of the stage-coach which was to convey him thither.

While sitting in the parlor of the hotel, musing upon the scenes through which he had passed, a stranger entered, and, seating himself on the sofa by the side of Simon, addressed him in a friendly tone of voice. The disposition of the youth was open and affectionate, and as his companion was a gentleman of engaging manners, he very soon drew Simon into a conversation, that enabled him to learn something of his interesting history. He also perceived that he was intelligent, even beyond what might be expected from a youth of his age; and this, added to his vivacity and good manners, greatly interested the stranger.

This gentleman was a nautical commander, and as he was going to Providence, entertained his young friend,

who was an eager listener, with facts drawn from his experience while upon the billowy ocean, during their ride together in the stage to that place, from which the captain expected to sail very soon for Europe.

Ere these new friends parted, after they arrived at the end of their journey, Simon learned that his companion was to take lodgings at a public house in a central part of the town. He felt interested to remember the name of the street, and number of the building, and sincerely thanked the gentleman, who handed him his card, and politely invited him to call upon him, if he found an opportunity to do so ere he should leave the place.

Alighting from the stage at the hotel, Simon immediately sought his mother, by enquiring for a person who he thought would be likely to know her. He vainly endeavored to remember her name, but though he recollected the first letter, he could not mention a name near enough like it, to enable the individual to imagine who he meant. He could not, either, learn any thing about his brothers or sisters, and returned to the public house where he parted with his new friend, and informed him of the disappointment he had experienced.

The humane gentleman sincerely pitied the youth, and cheerfully offered him all the assistance in his power, in his long continued, though fruitless attempt to find his parent, until they both felt it to be of little avail to seek her more.

At this juncture, Simon was perplexed, and knew not what course to pursue. He thought, at first, it would be best to return immediately to the friends he had left in Brookfield; but knew that this would be useless, as his

riends were as ignorant as himself of the name he wished o learn.

He then reflected that it would be well to go to the place from whence his mother had removed; yet here a difficulty arose in his mind: he would be a stranger in a strange place, unacquainted with any one who had known his relations. His funds were limited, for at the time he eft Brookfield, he had little more money than sufficient to defray the expenses of his journey to Providence.

He made known his situation to his nautical acquaintance, and asked his advice in regard to what he ought to lo. This gentleman told him that it seemed he was hrown upon his own resources — 'I think, as you appear o have acquired a pretty fair education,' said he, 'for me so young, you had better, if possible, procure some espectable employment, and trust that future circumtances may conduce to reveal the name of your mother.

'I will follow your advice,' replied Simon, 'and hope may be able to find a situation ere you leave this port, or I am much inclined to regard you as my friend, and vhen you leave me I shall be lonely indeed.'

'But what if you should go with me,' said the gentlenan, 'I would like much to take you upon the voyage I m about to make; you would be gratified, and would learn nuch, too, from what you would see. I expect to return ere before the expiration of another year, when you will e more likely to find your friends than at this time, beause your brothers and sisters will be better known, in onsequence of having resided longer in the place.'

Simon was pleased with the captain's proposal, and hanked him for his kindness. Having learned that his

new friend was a man who feared God, and sought continually the best good of his crew, this lonely-feeling young man resolved to engage himself on board his vessel, and trust to the Providence of his Heavenly Father to guide him, at some future time, to the embrace of his only parent.

It hardly need be said here that early pious instruction had been greatly blessed to Simon; and it was confidently believed by his friends that he had been led by the goodness of God to exercise that humble faith in our divine Redeemer, which is alone acceptable to the Father of our spirits. When he went on board the vessel, he took with him, in his trunk, in which his wearing apparel was nicely packed, a bible and hymn-book, which were the last gifts of her who had so fondly watched over his helpless years. He valued these presents more than any thing else he possessed, for with the sight of them was associated much, very much, that he loved in memory to cherish, which his early and beloved friend had said to him ere she bade him a last farewell.

In better spirits than would be expected by many, Simon embarked on board of the vessel, which soon after spread her canvass to a prosperous gale, and was soon wafted far beyond the place where dwelt the mother of this unfortunate young man, ignorant of what had befallen her son.

After this vessel set sail from Providence, no satisfactory tidings respecting her, or any of those on board, were ever heard.

Mrs. Nelson had not dwelt long in Providence, ere she found an opportunity to visit Brookfield, which she gladly availed herself of. On arriving within a few miles of the

place, she stopped at the house of some aged relative to pass the night. She was kindly welcomed by these friends, who, being Christians, loved her as none but the followers of Jesus could. They looked upon her as one whose lot in life had been checkered by misfortune, and they longed to have her rest her disquieted soul by faith upon the arm of Almighty love. Aware of the fact that she possessed a strong and vigorous mind, it seemed to their view greatly desirable that her energies and talents should be made subservient to higher and more ennobling purposes than they had hitherto been.

Mrs. Nelson had not been long in the house of her friends, when she inquired after her son Simon, and was told that he had left Brookfield to seek for her. She was greatly disappointed on learning that he was no longer where she had, until that moment, fondly expected to behold him, and could hardly support herself on hearing this afflicting intelligence. The conviction flashed across her mind, in an instant, that she should never again be permitted to see this lovely youth, and she grieved for him even more than though she had heard of his death.

'O,' said she, 'when I supposed he was happy, with her he loved even more than myself, I was contented; but now, to know that he is gone, and know not where, is a greater trial than I can bear.'

Her friends strove to comfort her, but she almost, for a while, refused to be comforted; yet after her pious friends had endeavored to lead her to discover the hand of God in this unlooked for and trying dispensation, and commended her to their Father in Heaven in prayer, she became more composed, and retired to rest.

On the following morning she arose, weary and unrefreshed. In vain had she courted sleep during the night; it forsook her eyelids, and she had passed that wakeful night in contriving some means whereby she might possibly learn something concerning her absent son. Her heart sickened at the thought, that she was not again to meet on earth the lady who was greatly endeared to her on account of her tenderness to him over whom she now sorrowed.

'If I could but mingle my tears with those of this loved friend, on this occasion,' said she, 'it would be a solace to my feelings; as it is, I must submit to the trial of going to Brookfield, that I may learn all that our friends there have heard in respect to his going to Providence.'

She started at an early hour, and reached Brookfield in safety. Her friends in that place were surprised when she acquainted them with the cause of her sorrow; for they had supposed Simon must be with her, though they had felt disappointed in not receiving a letter from him after he had arrived at Providence. They soothed the feelings of this distressed mother, by informing her of the pleasing fact, that her son was greatly beloved by all to whom he was known. It was also a reflection which ought to have comforted her, that she might, by preparing for a better world herself, expect to behold her son in heaven.

Mrs. Nelson was directed to the public house, at which Simon awaited the stage-coach, thinking perhaps something might be learned more definite concerning him. She tarried only a few days at Brookfield, and then journeyed to the place whither she had been advised to

call, in hopes of obtaining the information she so much desired.

All she could learn, was what we have before related, and this account was given her by a person who rode in the same vehicle to Providence, that conveyed the captain and his youthful friend. The same individual lodged at the hotel with these persons, and consequently became acquainted with these circumstances, which, as he told Mrs. Nelson, interested him so deeply that they were indelibly engraven upon his mind.

Strangers as these people were to Mrs. Nelson, she was solaced by the sympathy they manifested for her. She returned, however, with an aching heart to her home, and it was long, very long, ere she could speak with calmness of this heavy chastisement. Every effort was made that ingenuity could suggest, to hear something of Simon, but all in vain.

His friends could not ascertain that he had ever had his name entered at any custom-house in the country, since he first sailed; and if he had returned, and sailed again, it was without the usual protection enjoyed by seamen. After using all the means in her power to find this lamented one, Mrs. Nelson relinquished the idea, entirely, of ever again beholding him.

CHAPTER IX.

Reward of treachery — Salina and Caroline — Benjamin's letter — his imprisonment by the British — his release — Trials of Mrs. Nelson.

During the short stay Mrs. Nelson made at Brookfield, she learned, to her astonishment, the reason of the change made in the will of her respected aunt. She was also informed of the heart-rending circumstances under which Mr. Oliver left this world.

The reader will expect to hear further particulars in relation to this unhappy man, and something like a detailed account will be given of him. It will be remembered that this person artfully possessed himself of money which honestly belonged to the bereaved family of Mr. Savage. Enough has already been said, to convince the reader that he obtained this gold by a base stratagem, taking advantage of the great weakness of his partial relative to effect his object.

The story that he had sustained losses, was fabricated, to excite the pity of his aunt; and the truth was, he wished a larger capital to employ in his business.

It was at this time that porcelain ware, manufactured in Liverpool, was considered a very profitable article of merchandise, in this country. Mr. Oliver was desirous of

importing a cargo; and as he could not command funds just when he wished to execute his plans, he wickedly resolved to convert that which belonged to another to this purpose, if possible. He did so; for he was one of those depraved beings who could

> '———————— smile and smile,
> And murder while he smiled.'

Very soon after coming in possession of this unjustly obtained wealth, he sent upwards of ten thousand dollars of it to England, to purchase goods upon which to speculate. Accordingly, a vessel which was heavily laden with merchandise, started for the United States just after the commencement of the war between this country and Great Britain.

The merchantman was captured by a British man-of-war, soon after it left the shores of 'White Albion,' and carried into a British port, thus disappointing the selfish desires of this unprincipled man. He risked twenty thousand more in other investments during the same year, and was equally unfortunate in regard to it, for owing to extensive failures, he lost every dollar.

Whether he felt these repeated losses to be a rebuke from heaven, is not known; yet it is certain that he was far from enjoying what remained of his ill-gotten treasure. He lived several years after this wicked transaction, moody and melancholy, every year increasing his gloom; yet the cause was unconfessed, even to his wife.

About seven years from the time he became possessed of the estate of his aunt, in a paroxysm of despair, he one day attempted to put a period to his existence. Provi-

dentially, he was detected before he had drawn the instrument of death deep enough to sever the strings of life, and was spared to make a confession, such as might be imagined would deter others from becoming so deeply involved in guilt.

After the self-inflicted wound of Mr. Oliver was first dressed by a skilful surgeon, hopes of his recovery were strongly entertained; but as the weather was intensely warm, an inflammation, attended by gangrene, soon manifested itself in such a manner as at once to dissipate every hope that the deluded victim of pride and worldly ambition would be permitted to rise from his bed of sickness. He was sensible of his situation, and suffered the utmost horror in view of death.

On one occasion, when his distressed wife and a faithful minister of the cross sat by his bedside, he cried out, in great agony, 'I cannot die! I am unfit to leave this world and appear at the tribunal of that holy God whose commands I have so long disregarded! Love of gain, yes, sinful love of gain, has been my destruction — to gratify this, I have sacrificed all else. Oh! how have I sinned in defrauding the widow and fatherless of their just rights. For this I have been signally rebuked, but I have not repented, and remorse has been the constant attendant of my every waking hour for years!'

The clergyman endeavored to lead him to cast his sins and cares upon Jesus, the sinner's friend, yet vain was the attempt; 'O!' said this suffering man, 'I dare not approach, by prayer, that God I have so wickedly offended!' After saying this, he remained quiet for some minutes; then, suddenly rousing, as if from a profound revery, ex-

claimed, 'Oh! I must alter my will, by doing which some reparation may be made to those injured through my instrumentality!'

In accordance with his wishes, his will was sent for; but ere the messenger returned, the reason of the miserable man forsook him, and there could not be any change made. After this, he lived but a few hours, and left his surviving relatives to mourn over his exit, without a ray of hope to illumine the dark cloud which hung over them.

Mrs. Nelson wept over the account given her of this wretched individual, and could not but reflect that it was better for her to forego what she had fondly expected to enjoy, in receiving the legacy of her aunt, than it had been for her treacherous cousin to receive it. She did not, however, feel quite reconciled to her situation in regard to wealth. She had been born rich, or of rich parents, and seemed to feel that she possessed a claim to remain so. She had never felt happy after her marriage connection with Mr. Nelson, and after hearing of the uncertain destiny of her youngest son, was subject to turns of the deepest despondency. The absence of Benjamin, too, was a constant trial to the feelings of his mother. Could she have but heard from him often, it would have been a relief to her mind; but she was even ignorant of the place of his residence.

Her second daughter, who, at the time now alluded to, was fast ripening into womanhood, was a young lady who delighted more in decorating her person, than in adorning her mind. Her mother, who loved her, 'not wisely, but too well,' incautiously indulged this propensity in her beloved daughter. She saw, with pain, a want of energy

in her child, yet dreamed not that herself, in a great degree, had been the cause of this inertness.

She placed her under the care of the best teachers, ambitious to have her educated in a manner fitted to render her useful as a teacher herself. In this, so far as books were concerned, the fond mother was not disappointed. At an early age, Salina's education was deemed sufficient to qualify her to become an assistant-teacher in a school. She was fond of reading, though she did not always choose such books as were calculated to improve and refine the mind and heart of a young lady. Much, very much, precious time was spent by her in perusing works of fiction.

A dear friend, calling one day, found her with one of the latest novels in her hand. She laid it aside at her entrance, evidently mortified at being surprised in doing what she was well aware grieved her mother and other friends. Her own conscience whispered, too, that she ought to be better employed. With a blush upon her check, she said, 'I have been looking over the latest novel to rest me, being fatigued with my labors in school.'

'Does such light reading refresh your mind?' asked her friend, in a tone of gentle reproof.

'I cannot say it really does that,' replied Salina; 'but there is something so fascinating in romance to me, that when I commence reading a novel, I know not how to stop, without finishing it. I almost wish I had never seen a book of the kind,' continued she, 'for now it is very hard to deny myself the pleasure afforded by reading them; still, I know there is no benefit derived from such reading.'

'You own,' said her friend, Caroline, 'that you do not get any good by spending your time in the perusal of fictitious works; are you certain that your mind is uninjured by them? Is not your taste, in a small degree, at least, vitiated by this mental dissipation? for it deserves no milder appellation.'

'I believe it has not injured me at all to read novels,' answered Salina, 'though the practice of reading them may have an injurious effect upon the minds of some; I only read such books for amusement, you know.'

'There is where the mischief lies,' replied Caroline; 'if you look through the pages of a romance, merely to learn the character of the book, it would be otherwise. You confess you are fascinated by such reading, and while that is true, you cannot read without being injured. Allow me to say, with the most tender regard to your feelings and happiness, that it is your immediate duty to throw aside such books for ever.'

Salina was not a self-willed girl; her temper was naturally amiable, and she repudiated the idea of proving ungrateful to friends who sought her happiness.

'I wish,' said she to Caroline, 'that I had courage to resolve never again to open a novel. I know if I should abstain from this practice, that it would be exceedingly gratifying to my mother; yet I know not how to do so, I love to read so very much.'

'It requires an effort, Salina,' said Caroline, 'to conquer our sinful inclinations; but the delight afforded us by so doing, more than repays for the sacrifice we may make. It has always been so in my experience, and I doubt not it would be so in yours.'

'You have more resolution to enable you to subdue what is wrong in your feelings, than I have,' said Salina. 'If I was like you, I would say at once,' pointing to the book lying upon the table before them, 'that is the last work of fiction I will ever read; for I should know that it was not in vain thus to resolve. But I have not firmness enough for this; I fear I should not keep the resolution if I should make it.'

'Now,' said Caroline, 'do not, my dear girl, offer so flimsy an excuse for neglecting a known duty. Why, what would you think of a man that had indulged in intemperance, who, upon being requested to sign the temperance pledge, should make the same excuse? would he be excusable upon such grounds?'

'Not exactly,' said Salina, smiling; 'but the case under consideration is different. Intemperate drinking is a great sin ——'

'Stop, my friend,' interrupted Caroline, 'and tell me if you mean that it is easier for one to overcome glaring faults, because they are such, than to cease the commission of those less conspicuous? Or is an individual under greater obligations to overcome great sins, than those that are less aggravated?'

'No, I do not mean any such thing as that, only it seems strange to me that any one should ever be tempted to drink ardent spirits to excess, and it does not appear so unnatural to love novel-reading?'

'It is true,' answered her friend, 'that one does not degrade, physically, like the other; still, both practices are baneful in their effects; but, believe me, it must require more strength of purpose to abstain from indulging

appetite that has been long sinfully indulged, than to cease from gratifying a taste for hurtful reading. I think you and I, if possible, owe a greater debt of gratitude to our Heavenly Father than the poor inebriate, because He has kept us back from presumptuous sins. Surely we are under greater obligations to subdue whatever is evil in our habits, without attempting to excuse ourselves from the duty.'

'You are right, Caroline,' said Salina, 'I believe all you have said is true. I do think it is in the power of a person to form his or her own character aright, if the task be but begun before evil habits are too firmly fixed.' Here Salina paused.

'Stop not there, my dear girl,' said Caroline, 'but feel that wrong habits, even when long indulged, have been, and always may be overcome by looking upward for strength and that wisdom which is profitable to direct.'

'Well,' said Salina, thoughtfully, 'I must begin in earnest to make myself such a woman as my beloved aunt often says she wishes me to become; that is, one who will be useful in this world, and happy in the next.'

'It rejoices me to hear you thus express yourself,' rejoined her friend; 'but I want you to promise that you will not be disheartened, should your first attempt be less successful than you may anticipate. First, try, courageously; if you fail, try again, and even again; if you would conquer, yield not to any discouragements; then you will be sure, at length, to come off victorious.'

'I dare not promise so much now,' said Salina, 'but I think if ever I become as good a woman even as my

mother, I shall do pretty well. I mean to commence the work of self-discipline at once.'

Caroline smiled at these last remarks of her young friend; — it was a smile of approbation.

Salina was not unmindful of the kind interest her friend manifested in her welfare; and resolved, if possible, to break the chain of every wrong habit she had been wont to indulge.

The practice of novel-reading she abandoned, and found it not so hard to do as she supposed it would be.

She then resolved to pray for help, each morning, to enable her to do something, during the day, for the good of others. In this way she was soon enabled to overcome a habit of indolence, to which she had ever been strongly prone; and her happiness was so much enhanced by each victory gained over self, that she ever felt grateful that she had early been led to feel the importance of self-discipline.

The example of her dear friend, Lucy, stimulated her in striving to conquer selfishness, while the society of this gentle girl, tended greatly to elevate and refine the feelings of Salina. Caroline, who was the senior in years of both these young friends, was the means of great good to Salina; and Mrs. Nelson could not but feel thankful for the favorable influence by which her dear child was surrounded, and considered herself blessed in being permitted to behold the improvement which was strikingly apparent in the character of Salina.

This daughter was the companion of her mother. Her hopes of future earthly happiness rested upon her habitual and cheerful obedience; and as she constantly endeav-

ored to divert the thoughts of this dear parent from past afflictions, she appeared like an angel of mercy, sent to soften and gild her pathway to the tomb. Mrs. Nelson often spoke of her son Benjamin, and as often Salina would strive in some way to turn her thoughts to present objects, and thus beguile her of an hour of sadness and useless self-reflection. Frequently, when she surprised her bathed in tears of bitter sorrow, she would kiss away her tears and encourage her to trust always, and look upon the side that was brightened by the rays of hope.

One day, as Mrs. Nelson and her affectionate daughter sat conversing together upon the subject of Benjamin's voluntary absence, and of Simon's singular fortune, a young man entered and handed Mrs. Nelson a letter. She took it, and hastily broke the seal. The hand-writing was familiar, and, glancing at the bottom, she discovered the signature to be Benjamin's. Quite overjoyed, she looked over the letter again and again, for her tears well-nigh prevented her from really discovering the welcome lines, as she hurried over them.

At length she handed it to Salina, who being less affected by the joyful surprise occasioned by the reception of this welcome communication, read it aloud. Benjamin commenced his epistle with a respectful apology for his long silence. He stated that soon after leaving home, which event occurred, as the reader will recollect, during the war, he took passage in a vessel bound to a distant part of the continent. They had not been many days at sea, before she was overtaken by an English man-of-war, to which the American captain was compelled to surrender, in consequence of the superior force of the enemy.

The officers, crew, and passengers, were all taken prisoners, and carried into a British port, where they were confined until the close of the war.

Benjamin said he would gladly pass over all he suffered, both mental and physical, in the prison into which he was thrown, for the bare recollection of those scenes chilled him with horror; and he would spare his friends the gloomy description of the manner in which he was forced to live for nearly eighteen months. When he was released from his confinement, finding himself destitute and depressed, he regretted having left the parental roof, yet a feeling of pride forbade him to return, in his present condition. So he at once determined to remain abroad, until he could procure employment of some kind, which might enable him to earn a sufficient sum to carry him home respectably. 'I never could, after leaving my mother with such feelings as I did,' said he, 'send to her for funds; therefore, as I was favored to meet a person with whom I had been acquainted in the vicinity of home, I ventured to inform him of my circumstances; and without being obliged to ask the favor, he very kindly proffered me the loan of money sufficient to purchase wearing apparel, by means of which my appearance was respectable.'

'This gentleman, too, was a friend in helping me to obtain an eligible situation in a counting-house, in one of the principal cities in the Southern states.' Being an excellent book-keeper, and proving himself worthy of confidence by his strict integrity and unremitting attention to business, he had not been two years in the mercantile house in which he first engaged, ere he was taken into partnership with his employer.

This firm was signally fortunate for many years, and at the time Benjamin wrote to his mother, he had himself accumulated quite a handsome property. The house traded extensively in cotton, which they had in part cultivated upon their own plantations. Benjamin said in his letter—'I intend to visit you, my dear mother, as soon as I become rich, that I may benefit you. Sometimes I am obliged to think you are no longer living, for I have addressed, within the last two years, several letters to the place where you resided when I left home, but not having received any answer, am led to conclude that you either feel too much hurt by my conduct to notice me, or are no longer an inhabitant of earth.'

It hardly need be said, that the young man had misjudged in regard to the silence of his mother. He had not written until after she removed from Roxbury, consequently, his letters never reached her, except the last, which was noticed in a list of advertised letters by a friend of Mrs. Nelson's, who kindly forwarded it to her.

When Salina had read this letter, it was sometime ere her mother became composed, as she was quite overcome by the intelligence it contained. She requested her daughter to write a reply immediately, that the anxiety of Benjamin might be relieved as soon as possible. In compliance with the wishes of Mrs. Nelson, Salina sat down, without delay, and wrote a long letter, stating all that was calculated to interest a son and brother, respecting the family from which he had so long been absent. She did not fail to give him an account of the painful absence of Simon from his friends, expressing, at the same time, a

hope that Benjamin might be led to make some exertions to learn, if possible, something concerning his destiny.

Not many weeks after this letter was sent, another arrived, from the same individual, of a character calculated to embitter the future days of his doting parent. He stated that owing to some adverse circumstances he had thought it expedient to remove to a place far distant from that at which his first letter had been dated, and change his name. He desired the last-named fact to remain a secret, lest the discovery should greatly injure him. This letter was closed by entreating his mother not to feel disquieted on his account. He then bade her an affectionate, though abrupt farewell, saying, 'You will never hear from me again!'

This singular communication filled the before sad heart of Mrs. Nelson with heightened sorrow. Suspense was now added to the pain of lengthened separation, and she was left to conjecture the reasons why he should so soon alter all his plans.

'O,' said she one day to Mrs. Foster, 'if he had told me the cause of his strange conduct, I should have been satisfied. Even to know the worst of anything we dread, is better than being kept in doubt and perplexity. Sometimes,' continued this broken hearted mother 'I fear he has been led to the commission of crime; but I cannot, will not give place to such an idea. It is too distressing. I will hope better things; and, spite of the dark cloud which at present overspreads my horizon, will watch and wait, hoping, at length, to be enabled to discern light breaking forth amid this intense gloom.

Mrs. Nelson could not believe that she was always to

be deprived of the sight of both her sons. 'O,' she often said, with emphasis, 'it cannot be that God will forbid me ever again to behold those dear objects of my love, and yet continue them on earth, while I know not where they are! O, for support under so heavy a chastisement.'

When she saw friends who enjoyed the society of sons at home, she was often tempted to repine at the allotment of heaven in regard to herself, while she envied the happiness of those whom it pleased a just God to favor with the blessings of which she had been deprived. Her will was not yet subdued. She would not, could not, as she then thought, feel reconciled.

From Loraine she heard frequently, and as often learned that he was happy and prosperous. The effect made upon his mind by what occurred after he was wounded in battle, was permanent; and, ever after those events, he gladly acknowledged the interposing hand of his merciful Creator. His letters were a source of great comfort to Mrs. Nelson; as was also the society of Salina and her younger children. Perhaps one reason of this was, that she had avoided some of the errors into which she had fallen in the training of her elder children. Though she understood not the spirituality of the Bible, at this period, she admired its precepts, and strove to make her children acquainted with its interesting pages.

The reader may have inferred, ere now, that Mrs. Nelson had already suffered as much or more than generally falls to the lot of one of the children of men. The inference is in accordance with the experience of the multitude; still, it is true, that this lady was, after this time, called to

taste afresh the bitter, bitter cup. Trials she passed through, which, though intensely severe, she always, after they were past, regarded as the means of her highest good.

CHAPTER X.

Unfortunate Occurrence — Death of Loraine — Shays' Rebellion — Humorous Letter.

THE last marriage of Mrs. Nelson was entered into from motives of personal convenience on her part, consequently there was little happiness experienced in this unfortunate union.

Year after year glided by, and each revolving season only increased the want of sympathy between the parties. The disparity in their ages became more and more conspicuous as they grew older, and not unfrequently was the pride of the husband wounded by an ill-bred expression of surprise at the manifest difference in the appearance of this couple, made by unthinking yet observing individuals.

Mr. Nelson, by degrees, became less solicitous to please his companion, and less careful in respect to wounding her feelings; and not unfrequently would he repeat to her some coarse remark which he had heard made in regard to her, that would greatly irritate his wife, and give rise to many unpleasant words between them.

Mrs. Nelson, when too late, realized the fact that in forming this connection she had overlooked the most important of all considerations — that of sustaining her dignity in the eyes of those over whom she was called to

exert an influence. She wept in secret, yet was too proud to admit that she had been the means of her own unhappiness.

One day, as her husband and herself were seated at the tea-table with the rest of the family, some slight remark was carelessly dropped by Mr. Nelson, which his companion interpreted into a reproach upon herself. Her feelings were irritated, and in presence of the whole family she accused him of unkindness and want of regard for her. He replied by saying, 'I never shall be less unkind than I have heretofore been.'

After this exposure of their feelings, they seemed not at all anxious to conceal the fact that there was a want of harmony between them, and they lived along, from month to month, in each other's society, only to cultivate a feeling of aversion to each other. There was not one point upon which their feelings were congenial, except that they were both weary of each other's company, and wished, by some means, to rid themselves of any obligation to preserve inviolate the marriage contract.

Mrs. Nelson affirmed that it was harder to live with an unpleasant man who was sober, than with one who was pleasant, even if he might be called a drunkard.

Doubtless, in this unhappy affair, blame rested upon both parties; for they were alike destitute of high-toned moral principle.

It is needless to enter into a detailed account of all that took place relative to these unfortunate persons. They parted, not with feelings of anger, but with those of mutual distaste for each other's society; and often, in after life, when they met at the homes of *her* children, a stranger

would not even suspect that they had ever been more to each other than formal acquaintances.

Soon after the separation of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson, this lady was called to mourn over the early and unexpected death of Loraine. When she received the letter that contained the sad intelligence, and gazed a moment upon the black seal, her heart sank within her.

Her grief was deep, when, upon perusing it, she learned that Loraine had been removed suddenly by death. Ever after this young gentleman suffered the loss of his arm, he had applied himself assiduously to such business as he could attend to with the greatest ease.

He taught school, and was very successful. His scholars regarded him with a feeling of reverential affection that gave him an influence over them which he did not fail to improve, in endeavoring to impress upon their minds a sense of their duties and responsibilities.

Loraine never appeared to lose sight of the unpleasant truth that his waywardness in youth, evinced in his disregard of the feelings of a parent, had been made the means of depriving him of a valuable limb; and he desired much that his example might be made the means of great good to others.

It is rare to see a person possessed of an ardent temperament like Loraine, whose spirit, in the meridian of life, is so sweetly subdued as was his. He felt the need of vigorous personal effort, to overcome his natural propensities to evil, and this fact led him constantly to energetic resistance of what was wrong in his character.

When overtaken by his last sickness, he was not surprised at, or unprepared for the solemn event. Although he was not considered immediately dangerous until the

morning on which he died, he felt impressed with the idea that he should not recover; and, consequently, made every necessary arrangement for the comfort of his family.

The day previous to his dissolution, he said, while conversing with his wife, that from the nature of his disease he thought he was very liable to expire suddenly; 'and,' continued he, 'I trust I shall not be obliged to walk through the valley of the shadow of death alone.'

His companion, though she realized not his situation, rejoiced at witnessing the composure of his mind.

On the morning of the next day, Loraine arose from his bed and looked out of the window of his sick-room, with feelings of delight, upon the beautiful scenery of nature by which his dwelling was surrounded. As he watched the meandering of a gentle stream that flowed along at the foot of a mountain, the sides of which, at this moment, presented in their fading foliage, for it was autumn, a striking illustration of the frailty of man, he exclaimed, 'How emblematical is the natural world of the destiny of mortals! I discover in this calm rivulet before me a lovely emblem of the peaceful course of one whose hopes are fixed above; and in the gorgeous appearance of these faded flowers of earth, I discern an exact resemblance to the fragile glory of man! No wonder that David exclaimed, when contemplating the greatness and goodness of that infinite Being who formed the universe, the humblest parts of which call forth the admiration of the reflecting observer,—"What is man, that thou art mindful of him! and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"'

After looking abroad upon the prospect which he loved to contemplate, until wearied by the exertion, he turned from the window and seated himself in his easy-chair.

Soon after he sat down, his friends observed a change in his countenance, and drawing near him, found he was dying. He spoke not, but his features were illumined by a smile that seeemed expressive of the sentiment uttered by Doddridge, in the following beautiful lines:—

> 'When death o'er nature shall prevail,
> And all my powers of language fail,
> Joy through my opening lips shall break,
> And mean the thanks I cannot speak.'

His friends were afflicted by his death, yet wished to die like him.

His bereaved companion stated the consolatory truth, in her letter to his mother, that he had given his acquaintances and friends reason to hope he was removed to a sinless world. Poor Mrs. Nelson felt that her sources of earthly comfort were fast passing away; and she was almost inconsolable at the thought, that now she had but one son spared to her, and soon, very soon, she expected to be separated from him also.

At this crisis in her history, she was cheered by the unexpected renewal of a close friendship with a sister who had been, in early life, much devoted to her. This sister had spent many years far distant from the home of Mrs. Nelson, and by the providence of God seemed guided to her just at the moment when this oft-afflicted lady stood most in need of her society.

Mrs. Coleman, the sister of Mrs. Nelson, was exactly the reverse of herself in disposition and character. She was mild and forgiving, and daily strove to learn of Him who was meek and lowly in heart.

This lady long grieved in view of the unfortunate wan of self-control manifested in the conduct of her sister, an imputed much of the sufferings she had endured to thi defect in her character. As she was now much in he society, she noticed, with pain, that Mrs. Nelson was hi bitually irritable in her family. Mrs. Coleman affectio ately admonished her upon this subject, and was please to perceive that her efforts, in this respect, were not i vain.

Mrs. Nelson was most tenderly attached to this siste and was willing to own to her, faults that she had neve before confessed to any one. She seemed to revisit agai in imagination, the loved scenes through which she ha passed

'When all was new, and life was in its spring;'

and as she found, by taking a retrospective view of a that had occurred since with Mrs. Coleman she ha danced in childish mirth along a lovely walk, shaded by majestic oak, which during the warm season of the yea had been the spot chosen by the children of Mr. Weldro as a rural resort, that her feelings had lost far too muc of their freshness.

She saw that her sister seemed to enter into the plan of her own children with much of that warmth of feelin which children and youth love to see manifested by thei superiors, when in the society of the young, and though perhaps she had done her own dear children an injury, i failing to cultivate and exercise a similar disposition t wards them.

As she had feared, her youngest son, whose name wa

Walter, was not contented to remain at home, and left his sorrow-stricken mother, notwithstanding she entreated him to stay and allow her to feel that one support was left her. He promised to return soon, but unforeseen causes prevented him, for some time, from doing so.

She often told Mrs. Coleman that her cup of suffering could not *hold another drop*—it had overflowed. But not until she had experienced these many reverses, was she led to cast her burdens upon the arm of omnipotent strength; then she felt that her sorrows all were hushed, and with calmness she could review her past afflictions with a desire to improve by a remembrance of them herself, and also to use much in her experience as an argument to dissuade others from following the unpleasant path she had so long travelled.

Mrs. Coleman rejoiced in the change that was strikingly visible in her sister, and enjoyed much in her society. They lived much in the past, and profitably too, for they loved to review scenes and events in which the unceasing watchfulness of their Heavenly Father could be discerned.

One evening, as these sisters sat by the cheerful fire-side of Mrs. Nelson, in company with several of their children, their thoughts reverted, as was often the case, to by-gone days, and they related many little incidents that greatly interested the young persons present. Mrs. Coleman's experience had been very different from that of her sister. She had known less of change than the former; but had been a very observant person, and had been favored in visiting many places and becoming acquainted with a variety of interesting occurrences.

She was often called upon to entertain friends by the

relation of one circumstance, which took place during the short period known as Shays' insurrection.

At that time Mrs. Coleman was a girl about eleven years of age. She had an uncle who resided in one of the small towns of Massachusetts, and was the proprietor of a large public house, which was, at the time in allusion, generally crowded with guests.

It will be remembered by many that this disgraceful rebellion was caused by a few who were dissatisfied with the measures adopted to discharge the debt incurred by the government during the war. These rallied around their leader, one Daniel Shays, a captain in the revolutionary army, and had the hardihood and folly to suppose the brave men who had struggled years to free themselves from the yoke of oppression, would suffer a few unprincipled persons to impose upon them the unjust restraints at which their noble spirits revolted.

Mrs. Coleman was at this time residing in her uncle's family. It was after the death of her lamented father, and she was placed, at the urgent solicitation of her uncle and aunt, under their care during the first year or two after that painful event. But for the occurrence we are about to relate, she would probably have always remained near her childhood's home.

Great excitement prevailed, wherever tidings of this unhappy affair were carried; and many, very many rash deeds were perpetrated by those who in the main were good citizens in the community where they lived. Indignant at the baseness of those who were aiming to injure or overturn our newly-renovated State laws, they overlooked

the fact that they might be guilty of wrong, even while endeavoring to suppress wrong in others.

One night, during that season of excitement, suspicion was entertained that some of the followers of Shays, who were attempting to escape from the justice they so much feared, had taken lodgings at the hotel of Mr. Hamlin. A number of rash individuals, when conversing together upon the subject, resolved to raise a company of fifty or more armed men and enter the house to drag, as they affirmed, the coward rebels to the punishment their violence merited.

It did not take long, at a time when every one was deeply interested in each passing event of every day, to rouse the mob spirit in the bosoms of ardent young men, who longed to do something to manifest their love for their country. Before midnight, a company of fifty men on horseback, halted before the house of Mr. Hamlin. The inmates of the dwelling were all quietly sleeping at the moment, but were instantly aroused from their slumbers by a discharge of musketry into the building.

'O,' said Mrs. Coleman, 'that night was a dreadful one to all in the house! I slept with a young lady, a relative of my aunt. We heard the report of the muskets, and started from our bed in alarm. We attempted to reach the room where uncle slept, but to our consternation found it to be impossible, as the invaders had entered the house by the front door and windows, and were going from room to room in search of insurgents, of whom they very confidently expected to find some.

'The lady who lodged with me, as well as myself, was greatly terrified, and we were afraid to remain in our

chamber. We soon heard the footsteps of some of men approaching the room, and, still more alarmed, took as much of our clothing as we could get hold o the darkness of the night, and ran hastily down the l stairway into the cellar. My companion led me tremb to a large old-fashioned arched closet, used for stores. closed the door after entering this hiding-place, and companion assured me that we were safe enough, "f said she, "no one will ever think of looking for us he

'In this, however, she was disappointed. We s awhile, listening anxiously to the invaders as they ram through the spacious rooms just over our heads. We t bled,' said Mrs. Coleman, 'with fear as we stood wai the result of these strange doings, and shivered with c for it was mid-winter, and our naked feet pressed the d earth upon the bottom of the cellar.

'It was not long ere we began to fear that we shoul molested, yet had not time to anticipate the trouble l ere we realized it. The strange guests, having finis their search above stairs, felt the need of refreshment; not finding a sufficient quantity of wine in the bar-ro they determined to seek it in the cellar. In pursuanc this determination, several of the men came down, very soon found the closet in which we poor girls v secreted, as we thought.

'The door was opened, and a tall, red-faced, and f cious-looking man peeped into our hiding-place. ' young lady, as well as myself, was alarmed. I was much frightened to speak. My companion, who was af ed differently, as soon as she saw the intruder, exclain in a resolute tone, "If you lay your hands upon us, it be at the risk of your life!"

'"Indeed,"' responded the man, who was disappointed in not finding the object of his search, '"as it happens, I do not wish to trouble you;"' at the same moment closing the door upon us, and turning to one of his companions, who had just descended the stairs, he asked if he had found the wine. He answered, '"No."'

'"Is there not some spirit in that closet?"' inquired the other, pointing, as we supposed, to the door of our retreat.

'"Yes,"' replied the person who had so unceremoniously looked in upon us, '"I found *spirit* enough there, I assure you, but not the kind I like — there is nothing there but girls, one of whom threatened me most unmercifully, you may depend!"' They then withdrew to the room above, laughing heartily at the expense of my companion.

'Several hours elapsed before we dared to leave this place of concealment. We knew by what we had heard that there was much excitement throughout the dwelling, yet suspected not what had occurred. Having at length succeeded in reaching our chamber without being molested, we finished dressing, and hastened to that part of the house where we hoped to find our uncle and aunt. We found them in the front entry. Uncle was in custody of an officer, and aunt was pleading that he might be released.

'It appeared that uncle had resisted the assaults of these midnight visitors, and also refused to inform them whether he had lodged any of the rebellious party at any time, and was silent when asked to designate those who were under his roof at that time, feeling that his interrogators had no authority to enter his house and disturb its inmates in that manner.

'The assailants, provoked at this insolence, as they termed it, went and reported him to the officers whose duty it was to ferret out all disturbers of the public peace, as a conspirator among the followers of Shays. Thus accused, he vainly protested his innocence, and was not believed, though he affirmed to the last that there was not an individual they sought under his roof. He was forced into a sleigh, and carried to the county jail, where he was imprisoned upon these false pretences.

'The house of my uncle was greatly damaged, and several of the inmates wounded, by the ruthless assault that had been made. The family were too much confused, on the following morning, to attend to their customary avocations; and the state of the building was such as to oblige aunt to close the hotel, until it could be repaired. She had been instructed to allow things to remain as they were, until uncle should recover damages for what he had suffered.

'The news of what had transpired on that night, spread rapidly through the adjacent country. As soon as it reached Brookfield, which was an adjoining town to that in which uncle dwelt, my mother was informed of it, and hastened to console my aunt in her affliction. She found the state of things such that she thought it best to take me home with her; and in consequence of her doing so, I was soon after removed to a distant part of the country.'

'I wish,' said Salina, 'that unpleasant affair had never occurred, for then you and mother would not have been separated so many years.'

'We ought,' said her aunt, 'to regret the sin that was

committed in that act of violence; but we are bound to be satisfied with the providential occurrences of our lives. We are not creatures of mere accident; and I believe it was best for me to be parted as I was from my dear sisters in childhood, else I should have been spared the trial of leaving them.'

'Well, aunt Coleman, I hope I shall some day view things as you do,' replied her niece; 'but I want now to know how things turned out in regard to uncle Hamlin, for I suppose he was my great uncle, was he not?'

'Yes,' answered her aunt, 'and I am glad to be able to inform you that in the end uncle suffered neither the loss of property nor reputation, as he was proved innocent of the charges alleged against him, and also recovered heavy damages for the injury his property had sustained.

'Aunt was a person who knew not how she might be cheerful amid trial; and during the absence of her husband was very gloomy. He perceived the state of her feelings, from her letters; and being naturally humorous in his disposition, allowed himself to indulge this propensity, when answering her mournful epistles.

'In the first letter he wrote, after his absence, he stated that it was not a very great trouble to him to be confined in jail, for he did not feel like a culprit; and where there was not a sense of guilt to harrass the mind, it was not hard to be contented in almost any situation.

'"It grieves me,"' he continued, "to discover from your letters that your spirits are depressed; now let me persuade you, my dear wife, to cast your care upon one who careth for all who trust in Him, and wear a smile of cheerfulness which best becomes a Christian. For my own

part, I feel that it is altogether best for me to be, for a short season, where I am.

"In the first place it has improved me physically. I do not mean by this, that I have gained in point of flesh, for I have experienced the reverse of this, exactly — I have become so thin that I can cross my feet very easily now, which you know, on account of my corpulency, I have not been able to do for some time. This consideration is not to be forgotten; but there are others to be regarded also. One is, that I enjoy time for important reflection, which I hope to improve; and, last of all, the new doors and windows we shall be obliged to have are worth thinking of, especially as I need not expect to pay for them myself. Now, my dear, you must look upon the brightest side of the picture, and expect to see me at home soon." '

'I suppose aunt was cheered by the reception of this letter from her husband, was she not?' said Salina.

'Somewhat; but still she was inclined to be melancholy. Several years previous to this event, these friends were called to part with three dear children, in the short space of one week. They were all carried off by a malignant fever, and were all she ever had. After this event, aunt was never again like herself, but was cast down whenever afflicted.

'Uncle cared more on her account than for himself, in view of the inconvenience he had lately experienced, and rallied all his spirits to help sustain her. He wrote often, and each letter breathed an air of pleasantry and good humor.

'In a short time he returned home, had his house repaired, and all things comfortably arranged again. The

insurgents were all scattered abroad, and the circumstance of the nocturnal invasion they had experienced, was well nigh forgotten.

'Did you go away into the "far West," as it was then called, during that winter?' asked one of the youthful listeners.

'I did, at the very time uncle was confined in prison,' answered Mrs. Coleman.

'What a pity,' said Salina, 'that you could not always have remained with uncle and aunt, as they were childless.'

'In your opinion, my dear, I suppose it is; but I feel as if my lot had been disposed of very well. I could not have ordered things for myself as well as they have been ordered for me,' replied her aunt with a smile. 'It was well I did go; and with gratitude do I recall to mind the providential dealings of my Heavenly Father with those members of our family who went to the western wilderness in company with my mother.'

CHAPTER XI.

Thrilling Occurrence — Mrs. Coleman — Mrs. Howe — Orphans.

Mrs. Coleman, at the earnest solicitation of her young relatives, narrated several events which had occurred in the early settlement of Western New York, while she was there, which were calculated to impress the mind with a sense of that watchful care which we constantly experience.

'On one occasion,' said she, 'my sister, Mrs. Howe, went out with a lady who was carrying some dinner to her husband, who was engaged in the woods at some distance from their house. They had not proceeded far, when my sister remembered something she had left at home which she intended to have taken with her, and ran in haste to get it. In a moment after she turned back from her companion, she heard a shriek, and looking around, saw her friend held in the strong grasp of a large panther! Holding her fast, he sprang into a tree near the footpath that lay through the woods.

'With remarkable presence of mind the lady gave the panther the food she had prepared for her husband, for, as she afterwards told her friends, she felt she should probably prolong her life by so doing. Said she, in relating this occurrence, "My feelings cannot be described or imagined,

at the moment I sat on a limb of the tree into which I had been borne by the strong and ferocious beast by which I was then firmly held. Death seemed to me inevitable, and my blood was almost chilled with horror. I feared to die; and I dreaded to have my husband bereaved of my society in so awful a manner.

'"As these thoughts were passing through my mind, tumultuously, I saw my husband approaching. I called to him, and bade him discharge the rifle he had in his hand at the panther. Terrified at my situation, and shocked at the idea of being the means of my death, he replied, 'I know not what to do — I am afraid I shall destroy your life instead of that of the animal! O, what can I do, my dear wife! must I see you die now!'

'"This was said in a moment, and I answered by saying, 'Risk it — it would be far better to die thus by your hand, than be torn in pieces by this terrible beast! fire! oh, fire!'

'"In an instant he raised his musket, and taking careful aim, lodged its contents in the breast of the panther. The creature's hold of me relaxed, and I found it impossible to retain mine upon the limb on which I had rested. I fell to the ground with the animal (which was killed), and escaped with only a broken arm."'

'My sister,' continued Mrs. Coleman, 'remained, almost petrified with consternation, sufficiently near the spot to see her friend fall, and then ran immediately to her, and it will be believed that the tears which flowed profusely down the cheeks of these three friends, as they looked upon each other, under those thrilling circumstan-

ces, were tears of thankfulness. They were too much affected to speak, until after the lapse of several minutes.

'This providential escape of the lady from the very jaws of a dreadful death, made, as may be imagined, an abiding impression upon the minds of this party, now rendered doubly dear to each other.

'As soon as practicable, the lady was carried home by her friends, and a surgeon sent for. She suffered much pain ere her broken limb could be taken care of, as her husband was obliged to go seventeen miles before he could find a doctor. Still, the afflicted individual almost forgot her distress while her mind continually reverted to the signal interposition of Heaven in her behalf; and it was a theme upon which, in after life, she and my sister ever loved to dwell, with feelings of gratitude.

'Mrs. Howe said she could not but feel that if she had been grasped by the panther, instead of her friend, she would not have been spared; for she was aware that her mind was not as well balanced as was that of the lady, and she should have been too much frightened to keep her hold of the food by which the animal [illegible] it was owing to the [illegible] was not immediately [illegible]

Mrs. Ho[illegible]
She wa[illegible]
hood, [illegible]
the [illegible]
aff[illegible]
n[illegible]

affected in view of the remarkable preservation of the lady, to whom she was bound by the strongest ties of friendship. Hitherto she had regarded God as the governor of the universe; but ever after this event, she delighted to recognize His gracious hand in the most minute occurrences of every day, and felt that He who condescended to regard the lily and sparrow, would not be unmindful of her, but would order all things well.

This reflection gave a spring to all her actions, and led her constantly to endeavor to do right. A benign Providence smiled upon her efforts, and she was blest. During her period of probation, however, she was called upon to put forth all the fortitude she could summon, in order to meet the trials of life with composure.

She was favored with obedient child[illegible]e after another of whom, as they became old [illegible]ddened her heart by their moral loveliness. [illegible] was a son, manly in spirit, yet dutiful and [illegible] parents, but particularly so to his mother, [illegible]f his father, which event occurred when h[illegible]nth.

The young gentleman h[illegible] predilection for mercantile pursuits, and l[illegible]e age of twenty-[illegible] engage in trade i[illegible]ion. But though [illegible] from [illegible]his birth, and the [illegible] frequent visits, and [illegible]ace to his mother.

[illegible] all lived to an age to [illegible]r which they were re-[illegible]wo sons of this lady died [illegible] mother, though a mourn-[illegible] reflection, that in this life

they had been preparing to be forever happy in that state of existence which will never end.

One occurence, which took place while the eldest of these sons was confined to the sick room, will serve to show the spirit that was cultivated by the different members of this peaceful family, whose influence, though silent, was healthful as far as it was felt. One day, a girl called at the house of Mrs. Howe, weeping bitterly; and, being solicited by this friendly lady to make known the cause of her sorrow, told the following affecting story: —

Her parents, who had formerly been known to Mrs. Howe, were dead, and their children left to the care of relatives who had proved themselves mercenary in their actions towards the orphans. This poor girl, whose name was Janette, was the eldest. She had one sister younger than herself, and she was only fifteen; besides, she had two brothers, one about nine years of age, the other only two.

Said she to Mrs. Howe, 'I do not know but you will blame me for complaining, but it is known to many that although there was something left to support us by our parents, we are not treated well. O, I wish you could take some of us to live with you, Mrs. Howe! My little brother,' continued the weeping girl, 'is sick, and I know that he suffers for the want of proper care — I watch over and do the best I can for him. Do, Mrs. Howe, as you have sickness in your family, and cannot leave home, let me bring the little fellow here, that you may see him!'

Mrs. Howe readily consented to have the sick child brought to her house; for she had reason to believe that the story of the girl was but too true. She had been

acquainted with the mother of these orphans, some years previous to her death, and had recently heard that the children had been removed from the place where their parents died to that in which she resided. They were placed in families living only a short distance from each other, a son and daughter together. The eldest daughter was placed with her younger brother, that she might take care of him, while the other brother and sister were allowed to dwell together in the other family.

After Janette had left her house, Mrs. Howe reflected upon the object of her visit, and felt perplexed in regard to her duty in relation to these helpless children. She mentioned the subject to her family, each of whom expressed a wish that she should befriend these unfortunate ones.

'I intend to befriend them,' answered the mother; 'still I do not feel certain that I ought to do as much as I wish, to assist Janette.'

'I wish, mother,' said James, the young man who was sick, 'that you would invite this poor lonely girl to spend a few days with us, and have her little brother here too.'

'That I can do,' replied his mother, 'without giving offence to those with whom she resides;' and the kind lady immediately sent an invitation for her to come with the child, and spend a week or two at her house.

The relatives with whom she lived, understood that Mrs. Howe had been a friend to the mother of the orphans, and were very glad to get rid of them for awhile, by accepting the invitation. Janette was overjoyed at the thought of leaving the place where she knew that she was unwelcome.

As soon as Mrs. Howe beheld the little one, she saw that his situation was critical, and did all in her power to arrest the progress of the disease which threatened his life; but it was all in vain, and he sunk rapidly into the arms of death.

Janette mourned sincerely for the dear little one, yet rejoiced that he had been placed in a situation where he had received kind attention and care, and had at last expired in the arms of her benevolent friend.

After the death of the little one, Janette returned to the home she so much dreaded. It was not long, however, before she received various hints that led her to feel that her presence in the house was regarded as an intrusion. The disposition of the poor girl was naturally confiding and affectionate, and she felt that now her parents were gone, she found not one among those she had fondly thought would be to her as parents, who seemed to regard her with any apparent interest. Her spirits sunk beneath the weight of sorrow she daily felt pressing upon them, and she was often tempted to wish she had never been born.

Mrs. Howe saw, with pain, the state of her feelings, and deprecated the cause of her sadness. She was apprehensive that, if obliged to remain long under such an influence, it would seriously injure the moral feelings of Janette, by leading her to regard all those she met with distrust. This kind friend of the lonely orphan was desirous of removing her from her present situation; still, she knew there were obstacles in the way of doing so, which she was fearful she could not easily surmount. She was aware that a prejudice existed in the minds of the family

in which Janette lived, against herself, on account of her maintaining a reserve towards them.

They could not say that she had ever treated them otherwise than well. They were conscious that Mrs. Howe was their superior, and that led them to regard her with a feeling of envy.

This lady feared that if she proposed having Janette live with her, they would spurn the suggestion, and endeavor to make it appear that she was officious. This they did at the time the little boy died at her house, though it was far from being the case.

At length, she resolved, if practicable, to gain the confidence of the relatives of poor Janette. This she found no easy task; but by dint of perseverance, she ultimately accomplished her wishes so far, that they cheerfully consented to allow Janette to become an inmate of her family, and very soon threw the whole responsibility of providing for her support upon her generosity.

James died soon after Janette entered the family of his mother. His end was peaceful, for his life had been pleasant and useful; and it was long, for it had answered 'life's great end.'

> 'In vain our fancy strives to paint
> The moment after death,
> The glories that surround a saint,
> When yielding up his breath.'

Thus reflected those who stood beside his dying bed. His mother mourned his death, but was consoled by the remembrance of his calm and happy exit from earth, and she realized that one less tie bound her to this state of suffering and change.

Janette improved rapidly under the care of Mrs. Howe, and constantly, as her character was developed, pleasing traits were discoverable, not only to the eye of partial friendship, but to all around.

Circumstances occurred soon after the death of James, which convinced Mrs. Howe that it was her duty to undertake the care of the brother and sister of Janette. Accordingly, she received them into her house, and treated them as her own dear children. The sympathy cherished for these friendless orphans by each member of the family by whom they were heartily adopted, made it a pleasant task to each to do all in their power to dispel every feeling of sadness that found a lodgment in the breasts of these early-stricken ones.

Time glided away for many years, with the occurrence of little that would be strikingly interesting to the reader, if narrated. The children of Mrs. Howe were all settled in life, with families of their own, some very remote from their childhood's home. The mother, by some unforseen and uncontrollable circumstances, was obliged to be dependent upon her children, some of whom were not in situations to do for their parent as they desired.

At this period in her history, she who had not been unmindful of the deep-drawn sigh and burdened heart of the afflicted and parentless, was cheered and comforted by finding that 'bread upon the waters,' which she had cast there many days before. Yes, those very objects of her kind solicitude, were the instruments of illumining her pathway through the remainder of life.

Fortune smiled propitiously upon those who had in youth stood so much in need of friendship and counsel,

they delighted to manifest their grateful remembrance he favors they had received from their much loved efactress, by bestowing upon her, in the most delicate affectionate manner, the means of an ample support. These offerings of gratitude were exceedingly welcome ier who had long regarded the givers with maternal lerness. She realized that there was something ineffa- delightful in these expressions of thankfulness for past irs; and considered herself more than doubly repaid all her past toil and anxiety.

Irs. Howe was far from being alone in her experience he pleasant truth that it is far 'more blessed to give ı to receive;' and she was governed at all times by assurance. In putting forth acts of kindness, she ed not that value upon gold that is attached to it by ıy, because she felt that those who could boast but e of this world's goods, might impart to their suffering ow-beings much that would gladden the aching heart, wipe away the flowing tear. Surely, none need be appy, or unblest, in a world like ours, since enduring piness is ever to be found

'Where'er a tear was dried, a wounded heart
Bound up; a bruised spirit with the dew
Of sympathy anointed; or a pang
Of honest suffering soothed; or injury,
Repeated oft, as oft by love forgiven;
Where'er an evil passion was subdued,
Or virtue's feeble embers fanned; where'er
A sin was heartily abjured, and left;
Where'er a pious act was done, or breathed
A pious prayer.'

There, as the feeling poet averred,

'Happiness descending sat and smiled.'

Mrs. Howe was happy; not that she was faultless, or exempt from a share of sorrow, but because she was aiming to reach a high standard of personal excellence. She failed, it is true, to attain that degree of virtue for which she panted. She was not perfect, or at all satisfied with herself; but she pressed forward continually, and thus prepared daily for that abode of perfection and bliss to which she looked forward with the most joyful anticipations. Those who had been the objects of the disinterested benevolence of this lady, rose up to call her blessed; and, by imitating her example, exerted a happy influence in the sphere in which they were by Providence allotted to move.

It might truly be said of Mrs. Howe that 'she loved and served her God.' Happy would it have been, if all the members of her father's family had resembled her in goodness; and glad, too, would be the writer, if she had not to turn from the contemplation of loveliness, the view of which refreshes the spirit and bids it aspire to a likeness to the reality, to dwell upon traits of character which cast a sombre hue over this otherwise beautiful earth.

CHAPTER XII.

Gilbert Dunbar — Mrs. Dunbar — Horatio Newton — Rebecca — Henry — Clandestine Union.

It is often asserted that those dispositions of the mind which are earliest developed give the strongest bias to the actions of the man, if left unchecked until he reaches the period of manhood.

This assertion was true of Gilbert Dunbar. As soon as he was capable of putting forth a moral act, he evinced an uncommon love of money. It was his ruling passion; and to gratify it he scrupled not to sacrifice every thing that opposed this darling wish.

He was often known, when a mere child, to hold a piece of silver in his tiny hand, for hours, with a grasp that was considered at the time almost an exact mimic of the miser. He would also take money with him when he retired to his bed at night, and if, while asleep, he chanced to drop it from his hand, would, if he waked, cry until some one found it and gave to him again.

It is not known whether his parents strove to check this propensity, as he grew older, or whether they deemed it of little consequence to do so. It may safely be inferred, however, that they thought but little upon the subject; and

thus, by their neglect, suffered Gilbert to cultivate an acquisitive disposition.

At a very early age, he commenced trading in various articles, which he procured very readily from his father's store, and amassed quite a sum of money ere he arrived at the age of fourteen. Of this he was very proud, and often boasted to his youthful companions. Little did his affectionate parents think, that in allowing their son to foster his fondness for gain, they were helping to kindle a fire that would continue to blaze until it had destroyed not only the peace of their own dear child, but also of others endeared to them by the ties of nature and affection.

When Gilbert became a man, he expressed his determination to be possessed of a million, at any rate. 'If I cannot do as I wish,' said he, on one occasion, to his sisters, 'by being strictly honest, I will compromise my integrity; for riches I will have.'

He did accumulate gain, and was esteemed by the world around him an exceedingly prosperous man. Years passed, and he became a husband and father, yet riches continued to be his polar star. By his companion he was favored with a respectable addition to his fortune. Still, unfortunately, he was ignorant of the just value of the talent Heaven had lent him to improve for the benefit of himself and those around him.

His family consisted of two daughters and a son. The son partook not of the avaricious disposition of his father; but like his mother, to whom he was most ardently attached, he was generous, almost to a fault. He could not pass, unaided, a fellow-traveller to another world, whose case seemed to demand relief, or turn a deaf ear to the

many calls made upon those who have it in their power to diffuse, liberally, the blessings of intelligence and gospel truth to those who are destitute of this means of substantial good.

Not unfrequently was he rebuked, by his lucre-loving father, for his acts of liberality, when those very acts were far from being in magnitude what the spirit of the youth would gladly have made them. On such occasions, he looked to his mother and was silent, leaving her to excuse his conduct, if indeed it needed excusing, to his avaricious parent.

His mother taught her children to submit to, and reverence their father, though at the same time she felt it her duty to instil into their minds precepts with which the teachings of her partner in life were entirely at war. He would have them live for the gratification of selfish desires; but she labored to impress upon their minds a sense of the weight of obligation resting upon them, to keep in view the end for which they were created, and adopt early the sentiment of the poet, who has truthfully affirmed, that

> 'That man may last, but never lives,
> Who much receives, and nothing gives;
> Whom none can love, whom none can thank,
> Creation's blot, creation's blank.'

Often was the deep-drawn sigh of sadness breathed by Mrs. Dunbar, as she reflected upon the covetous temper indulged by the father of her children. She was well aware that he was not happy himself; besides which she had every reason to believe that the happiness of her children was greatly abridged by the miserly course he

pursued. It was little that she could do to obviate this difficulty in the way of the well-being of those who regarded her example as worthy of their imitation; yet that little was faithfully executed, and she had the pleasure of knowing that her influence over the minds of her children was such as was calculated to inspire them with the love of moral excellence.

Her eldest daughter, whose name was Rebecca, had a mind cast in a mould similar to that of her mother. Her father was proud of her, and looked forward dotingly to the time when the wealth of his family would be increased by her union with some individual possessing an abundance of riches. Not so Mrs. Dunbar. This lady, who placed a right estimate upon money, as a means of good, did not consider it indispensable to the future comfort of her family, and consented cheerfully to Rebecca's accepting the attentions of one who, though he could boast of many qualities requisite to render him a worthy companion for any young lady, was still destitute of what, in the opinion of Rebecca's sordid father, was the *sine qua non* of real greatness.

The business of Mr. Dunbar called him from home much of the time, so that there was opportunity afforded Henry, the young gentleman who sought the favor of Rebecca, to visit her some time without his knowledge. Mrs. Dunbar sanctioned his attention to her beloved child, from correct principle, and felt that she was acting the part of a mother in so doing. She hoped, and even ventured to expect, that in process of time the father of Rebecca would consent to receive into his family a young man of inestimable character, such as Henry had proved himself to be; yet did not think it best to be particular in regard to mentioning the subject, until it was absolutely necessary to do so.

This kind mother could not but believe that when it was well understood that a strong attachment was felt by Rebecca for this deserving individual, her father would not insist upon her discarding his addresses, because he was not, in one respect, what he desired a son-in-law should be.

In this, however, she was very much disappointed; for no sooner did the old gentleman learn that his daughter had received the attentions of Henry, than he became angry, and forbade her doing so any longer. His wife expostulated with him, long and affectionately, and urged him to recall this unfeeling command; but he was inexorable.

'What fault,' asked the anxious mother, 'do you find with Henry? is he not worthy of our dear Rebecca?'

'I find no fault with his character,' sternly answered the other; 'he is well enough, as far as that is concerned, in his place; but he is destitute of wealth, and my daughter shall never be united to a beggar, however fair his character, or gifted his intellect. I wonder,' continued the excited father, 'that you should encourage an intimate acquaintance between two young persons placed in circumstances so directly opposite to each other, as this Henry and our Rebecca!'

'I have done so,' calmly replied his companion, 'because I felt it a duty to do what, in my opinion, would enhance the highest good of our darling daughter, who, in a certain sense, is dependent upon me for the means of temporal comfort. It is my most ardent desire that Henry may be the partner of Rebecca's future life.'

'He never shall be,' exclaimed the enraged father; 'I will not be disappointed in the plans I have laid with regard

to her. Horatio Newton has asked her hand of me in marriage. He is in opulent circumstances, and she shall wed no other, without incurring the penalty of my displeasure, in living, ever after, unforgiven by me.'

'Stop,' said Mrs. Dunbar, mildly; reflect a few moments, ere you sacrifice your child to a wicked ambition to see her possessed of what can never make her happy. I conjure you not to oblige Rebecca to receive the attentions of a person she regards with a feeling of dislike such as I am sure she justly entertains toward Horatio Newton.'

'Dislikes him justly! how is that? what reason has she for this?' quickly inquired Mr. Dunbar.

'I think she has sufficient reason for wishing to avoid his company,' said the mother. 'He is disagreeable, even if he was moral, which you will admit is far from being true of him. He is arrogant and overbearing, and I am resolved that if it is in my power to hinder the marriage of my lovely girl with such a man, I will spare no pains to do so.'

This last expression was uttered with a warmth of feeling seldom betrayed by this excellent woman. All the feelings of a mother were roused by the determination her mercenary husband had just expressed, and it was hard to conceal her emotion. She thought, too, of her own situation, — being united to one with whom she could enjoy but little, if any congeniality of feeling and sentiment — and she scrupled not to affirm that it would be a far lighter affliction to see her much-loved Rebecca laid low in the embraces of death, than to see her sacrificed upon the altar of worldly ambition.

The person to whom Mr. Dunbar was desirous to have

Rebecca united, was the very reverse in character of herself. He differed from her in taste, sentiment, and everything else that was essential to the happiness of two individuals who were to spend a large portion of their lives in each other's society. More than this, he was partial to gay, and even bad company, and had naturally a strong propensity to indulge in the use of ardent spirits.

Mr. Dunbar was aware of these facts, yet often said that the young man was only sowing his wild oats, and by and by he would become steady. 'A reformed rake always makes a good husband;' and he had no reason to fear but his daughter would do well enough with him. His fortune was ample for their future support, if he did not attend as closely to his business as some of his friends felt it desirable he should.

The idea of his gold, eclipsed every thing else, in the view of Mr. Dunbar, and caused him to call that which was crooked straight, and the straight crooked. His judgment was sadly warped, in relation to any subject at all connected with the probable accumulation of money.

Mrs. Dunbar found it worse than useless to plead with him to alter his mind in regard to the course he intended to pursue with Rebecca. He was fully determined to follow the bent of his inclination, let whoever would oppose; and his wife submitted reluctantly, so far, at least, as not to make any objection in the presence of her family. At the same time, she endeavored to make Horatio feel a distaste for the society of Rebecca. She assured him that she was pledged to another, and never could see anything in him to regard with even the slightest complacency.

'Certainly,' said Mrs. Dunbar, 'you will not urge your suit, when you are persuaded that she has not any regard for you, and that her taste will lead her constantly to feel disgusted with your habits and manners.'

'I will not believe,' responded Horatio, 'that I cannot gain her good opinion, provided you will leave her uninfluenced by yourself. It cannot be that she really feels so great an aversion to me as you suppose; and as to her being attached to that poor aspiring Henry, it will make but little difference I suspect. She will, I am sure, choose an individual superior in every respect to this stupid fellow. I cannot and will not admit of his being my rival.'

'O,' said Mrs. Dunbar, shaking her head mournfully, 'you do not understand my daughter, or you would not indulge such an opinion of her.'

'But her father assures me,' said the presuming young man, 'that she shall be mine, and I will risk her becoming attached to me.'

'Then,' answered the lady, 'you risk all that is worth obtaining in marriage. Without this qualification in a wife you will ever be wretched, and Rebecca will never regard you favorably as her partner for life, — you may be sure of that.'

'No, no,' said he, 'on the contrary, I am sure that I shall soon learn her to love me.'

'You will never realize your expectations,' said Mrs. Dunbar earnestly; and here the conversation ended.

Horatio sought and obtained an interview with Rebecca. She treated him, as he approached her, with an air of distant politeness. She had consented to converse with him,

merely to please her father, who felt confident that his daughter would, ere long, comply with his wishes, and cheerfully consent to become the wife of the man of wealth.

Rebecca had told her father, unhesitatingly, that she was most sincerely attached to Henry, and that her happiness would be destroyed for this life if he continued to oppose her choice. But the old gentleman could not conceive of feelings more elevated than his own, or affection more refined than that which he daily offered at the shrine of mammon. Gold was his idol, and this had ever been the means of undermining his love of virtuous principle. He had no idea of an affection ardent and pure as that cherished by his daughter for Henry, or he would never have dreamed that she could, even to secure the approbation of a parent, cease to cherish the feelings which she now fostered towards this amiable young person.

As may be supposed, Horatio degraded himself in the eyes of Rebecca, by intruding himself into her presence, after the occurrence of the conversation that has been related. She looked upon him as a heartless being, who prided himself upon riches and external accomplishments, while he undervalued moral and intellectual excellence, and regarded with contempt those whom he considered his inferiors in point of worldly possessions. He had known Rebecca from early childhood. They had attended school together, and although she had always evinced a shyness towards him, he had too much vanity to suppose it proceeded from anything resembling dislike to his person.

He, moreover, had ever regarded Henry as beneath his notice; and it was not easy to believe, now, that this indi-

vidual had usurped that place in the heart of the lovely girl which he really thought himself entitled to. He was conscious, too, of possessing that which made him of great consequence in the eyes of Mr. Dunbar, and this reflection emboldened him to distress the young lady by pressing his claims upon her favor, unseasonably and provokingly.

After stating the fact that with the approval of her father he had asked an interview with her, for the purpose of soliciting her hand in marriage, he boldly told her that he was not to be refused.

'You need not be at all confident of my accepting your proposal,' replied Rebecca, with an expression of wounded sensibility in her countenance; 'I have never given you any reason to suppose I entertained a feeling of partiality towards you; and I think it rather unkind in you to speak upon this subject to my father, without knowing first that it was agreeable to me.'

'But you will be influenced by the wishes of your father, in so important an affair as forming a connection for life, will you not?' asked the young man.

'My happiness may be affected by his wishes,' said Rebecca, thoughtfully; 'but I can never, to please him, consent to be wedded to a man I regard with a feeling of indifference, or in other words, want of respect. My duty does not require me to do this. The precepts of religion are at variance with such a course; and that you need not trouble yourself or me further upon this point, I tell you plainly, I do not, I cannot consent to marry you.'

Somewhat chagrined by the words and manner of Rebecca, he looked steadfastly at her for a few moments,

without speaking, and then told her that he was not to be put off in that way by a girl like her.

'You deceive yourself, Horatio Newton,' said she, mildly, 'if you imagine that I can transfer my affections from a worthy object, to one that in my estimation is his inferior in every respect. I have pledged myself to Henry, and my mother has told you so; and I consider you as mean, contemptibly so, in intruding thus upon me, under such circumstances.'

Horatio, piqued at the frankness of Rebecca, as she uttered the last remark, arose and took rather an ungracious leave of her. He sought her father, and communicated to him the ill success he had met with, in his interview with his daughter; and but for the encouragement held out to him by this selfish old gentleman, would have abandoned the idea of ever becoming the companion of the noble-hearted and generous girl.

'You say, do you not,' responded Mr. Dunbar, after Horatio had related what Rebecca had said to him, 'that you are sincerely attached to the girl, sentimental as she is?'

'I do,' answered the young man.

It was to be believed that he affirmed, in saying this, what he really felt. He preferred this amiable young creature to any other lady he had ever seen, yet he was a stranger to high-toned, generous, pure affection. Self was his favorite. Wherever he went, his idol was carried with him. Rebecca had wounded his pride, and as her father urged him not to relinquish the hope he had cherished of gaining her esteem, he resolved at least to trouble her as long as he could do so, for the sake of retaliation.

Mr. Dunbar upbraided his daughter for her uncourteous conduct towards Horatio, although he charged the blame of it to her mother; and it appeared to his view strange indeed that she could be so blinded to the future good of her child.

Mr. Dunbar told his daughter, that if she refused to comply with his wishes in regard to Horatio, she would incur his displeasure, which she should never cease to feel while life remained.

'Do not say that, my dear father,' said Rebecca implor-ingly; 'I beseech you recal those fatal words — say not that I must sacrifice my comfort entirely in this world, or live beneath a father's curse — I cannot, O, I cannot con-sent to receive the visits of Horatio! I cannot love him!'

'And why not love him?' interrupted the old gentleman; 'I see no reason why you should dislike him, unless it be that you desire to oppose my wishes.'

'That is not so, dear father,' replied the distressed girl, taking hold of his hand, which he immediately withdrew from her, with an expression of disturbed feeling depicted in his countenance, — saying, at the same time, 'If you love your parent, you will obey him.' 'I will obey you in everything but making myself wretched by a connection with a person I cannot regard with any other feelings at the best, than those of indifference.'

'Indeed,' said her father, sarcastically, 'and yet you confess that you are attached to Henry.'

'I do, sir,' answered Rebecca, 'and always must be. You are prejudiced against him, father,' continued she, 'else you would see much in Henry to admire; I admit he is not rich, in one sense; still, he is worth more than

Horatio can ever acquire, with his present habits and feelings. He is noble-minded, energetic, and enterprising; besides, he is amiable, and daily strives to cultivate those affections which will render him always happy and useful. The world will be the better for the influence Henry will exert in it; but it will be, I am confident, the very reverse with Horatio. He is destitute of all those qualities which would endear him to me, even as a common friend; how, then, father, can I expect to look upon him as the chosen companion of my future life? how can I think of being united to such a person, in the nearest of all relations? My heart revolts at the idea! Father, I must plead with you to allow me, in this case, to act in opposition to your wishes. If you continue to insist upon my acting a part so contrary to my own convictions of right, I shall be forced to disobey you.'

'Then,' said the father, 'you will do it at the peril of my severe displeasure.'

Rebecca did not reply to this expression of her cruel parent, except with her tears, which flowed profusely. She left his presence in a few moments, feeling that she had incurred his bitter displeasure, and unburdened her full heart to her tender and sympathizing mother. This lady mingled her tears with those of her daughter, yet strove to impart comfort by inspiring her with the hope that her father would yet relent.

'Would that he might,' responded Rebecca, in a disheartened tone of voice, 'yet I dare not expect anything so favorable. His mind is fully made up, upon this subject. He is determined that I shall become the wife of Horatio.' She then reclined her head upon her mother's

neck, and wept aloud. Her mother encouraged her to be cheerful, and wait patiently a while. 'It is possible,' said she, 'light may, after all, shine unexpectedly to illumine your prospects.'

'I will try to hope so, my dear mother,' said the daughter; 'but father has forbidden Henry to visit me at home, and has told me not to meet him anywhere, designedly. I feel tempted to disobey this injunction; would it be wrong for me to do so?'

'I think there is no necessity for your doing this, my child,' said Mrs. Dunbar; 'doubtless you will meet each other providentially. I cannot advise you to do anything that would provoke your father, as he now feels.'

Rebecca was silent, while she resolved, mentally, to ascertain the opinion of Henry, and be governed by what he thought was right. It was not long ere she met him unexpectedly at the house of a friend, one who longed to see the happiness of this interesting couple consummated by their union.

This friend scrupled not to suggest the propriety of a marriage between the parties taking place, clandestinely, so far, at least, as the father was concerned; thinking, perhaps, that after the first gust of his anger was past, when he knew that they were indissolubly united, his feelings would be pacified towards them.

Henry did not reject this proposal, though he esteemed it rather a forlorn expediency to resort to. He proposed taking such a step to Rebecca. She hesitated at first, but being assured by Henry that she should, at any rate, return to her parent's dwelling, as soon as they were married, she consented to comply with his wishes. She

did not acquaint her mother with her intentions, lest that judicious parent should disapprove of the measure adopted; but, for the first time in her life, ventured to act upon her individual responsibility.

Never, perhaps, was a *runaway couple* more excusable, or entitled to more charity, than were Henry and Rebecca, as they rode to an adjoining state, where the marriage ceremony could be performed lawfully, without the intention of the parties having been previously made known to the community. They were pronounced 'man and wife,' received a testimonial of the fact to take with them from the clergyman, and returned to the home of the friend before mentioned, in a few hours after Rebecca left her home.

Many young ladies, situated as was this unfortunate girl, would have at once told a kind mother, as was hers, all that she had done; but Rebecca knew that it would occasion this dear parent regret, to learn that she had resorted to such a step, and for that reason resolved not to inform her of it, until after the lapse of a few days, at least.

Henry and Rebecca both wished to have her father know that they were married, yet dreaded the moment when a knowledge of the fact should reach him. They agreed together, that it would be best to live separately, as before. In doing so, however, they were not happy. The bare thought that they were thus acting the part of deceivers, notwithstanding their strong inducements to do so, disturbed them, and preyed upon the spirits of the hitherto confiding and ingenuous daughter.

Often did she weep, in view of her father's unkindness,

and wish that he possessed a heart to enjoy the blessings so lavishly bestowed upon him by a benign Providence.

It is presumed that Rebecca is already forgiven for the erring, premature step she has taken, by the reader, who sees in his or herself, faults, if not as glaring as the one under consideration, yet such as call for the exercise of that 'charity which vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, thinketh no evil, believeth all things, hopeth all things.' It is also believed, that even the callous-hearted father will be regarded with a more softened feeling, as his history is further traced, and the deep anguish of his soul seen, in enduring the afflictions which the indulgence of avarice had procured for him.

CHAPTER XIII.

Secret revealed — Sternness of Mr. Dunbar — Its effect upon Rebecca's health — James exposed to Danger from the Turks — Sickness of Rebecca—Dr. Felton—Reconciliation—Death of Rebecca —Remorse of her Father.

Mrs. Dunbar was quick to perceive the uneasiness of her daughter, but imputed it to the stern treatment the gentle girl daily received from her father; and dreamed not that there was in her breast a feeling of self-reproach commingling with that of sorrow.

It has been said that Rebecca was lovely; it was true, also, of her that

> 'Outward loveliness was index fair
> Of purity within ————.'

She had been the almost constant companion of her mother, and by her cheerfulness and innocent vivacity had beguiled that loved friend of many an hour of sad reflection. The least change in her was, therefore, a source of anxiety to Mrs. Dunbar, who would, if possible, to benefit her dear child, have sacrificed even life itself.

This lady affectionately communicated her feelings to her one day, as they sat together in the sitting-room. Rebecca, who well understood the character of this loved parent, was not altogether unprepared to learn the fact,

that the happiness of her mother was affected by the feelings she was conscious of having betrayed; and, weary of concealment, she unbosomed all her heart, with the same delightful, child-like confidence with which she had ever been accustomed to treat her mother.

On becoming acquainted with the important truth, that Rebecca had formally entrusted her earthly happiness to the keeping of one who, in her opinion, was a suitable companion for her, various emotions were excited in her breast. She could not reprove Rebecca, though grieved at the idea of what they both would suffer from the unrestrained violence of the feelings of her misguided husband, when he should be informed of the fact that his daughter had acted so decidedly in opposition to his fondest wishes.

As Mrs. Dunbar remained silent a short time, after the disclosure above-alluded to had been made, her daughter was fearful she had incurred her displeasure, and said, affectionately putting her arms around her mother's neck, 'You will forgive me, mother, will you not?'

'I do, my child, most heartily forgive you,' replied the mother; 'yet fear you have been the means of making both yourself and me unhappy, perhaps, during life.'

'I hope not,' answered Rebecca. 'I do hope that ere many months have passed, my father will think differently from what he has done heretofore. It may be that when he is aware that I am under the legal control of another, he will cease to mention the subject that has, of late, shed so much gloom throughout our dwelling. It was the hope of this which induced me to do as I have done, without consulting you, as I was apprehensive that you would disapprove of the course I wished to pursue.'

'I should have advised you to act differently,' said Mrs. Dunbar, 'still, it is not a matter of surprise to me that you have yielded thus to your inclinations. You cannot recall the past, but you will now be called to exercise much meekness, and a temper of mind that may, if possible, reconcile your father to you, as I am confident he will be offended with both Henry and yourself.'

'Is it best, mother, to inform him that I am married now,' asked Rebecca, 'or shall it remain a secret to him, until it may be hinted by some one of the friends to whom it is known?'

'By no means, my dear child,' answered her mother; 'act no longer a double part, no matter how great may be the temptation; it is ignoble to do so; and you will feel degraded in your own estimation if you attempt to practice anything bordering upon dissimulation. Wherein you have done wrong, it will be magnanimous to confess it; go to your father and tell him, with that reverence which becomes a child, the whole truth, and then entreat his clemency; this is the only right way.'

'I am convinced that I ought to do so, immediately,' replied the daughter, 'yet how can I perform a task so hard?'

'Look for help,' said the mother, 'to that rock which is higher than you.'

'I will try to,' faintly responded Rebecca; upon which her mother arose and left her daughter alone in the room.

Mrs. Dunbar had not been absent long, when, on looking out of the window, the trembling daughter saw her father approaching the house. Her first impulse, if obeyed, would have led her to leave the room; but, after a

moment's reflection, she determined to be governed by the wishes of her mother, and sat attempting to sew, until he entered the room and seated himself near her.

Both were silent for a time. At length, Rebecca, addressing the old gentleman, while her voice was nearly choked with emotion, told him what she had done, and implored him to regard her favorably if he could. 'Do not refuse to grant me your forgiveness, dear father,' said she, 'for you know not how strongly I was tempted to disregard your authority.'

While saying this, she had not sufficient courage to raise her eyes from the floor. Her father remained silent several minutes, being well nigh overwhelmed with disappointment and rage; at the expiration of which time he said in a stern voice to Rebecca, 'Leave my presence, and dare not to see my face again, unless I send for you; ungrateful, unnatural child, thus to requite a doting parent!'

She instantly obeyed, with sensations that cannot be described, and retired to her chamber. Mr. Dunbar was incited to a feeling of revenge towards his daughter, —'Yes,' said he mentally, 'I will punish her for this contempt of my wishes. She shall know what it is to repent of her conduct.'

The temper of this person, though far from being good, was not hasty. He could not easily forget an affront; but pondered it in his mind, until it increased in his fevered imagination, in magnitude ten fold.

It was some days after this conversation with his daughter, ere he decided upon the course he should pursue in regard to her. At one time, he thought he would banish

her forever from his house, and disinherit her. Then it occurred to his mind, that if he did, she would be allowed to enjoy the society of Henry without reserve; and that idea was torture to his indignant feelings. 'No,' said he to himself, 'this conceited stripling shall not possess my child in peace. I will thwart his purposes as much as he has thwarted mine. Rebecca is not of age to act independent of me; and if she is married she shall continue to live at home; and if she gets an opportunity to spend many hours with this Henry, for one year at least, it will be more than I expect. Henry shall find me a match for him, at any rate.'

As may be supposed, Mrs. Dunbar was obliged to endure the bitter displeasure of her husband, on account of the part she had acted in respect to Rebecca; and he accused her of having been accessory to the imprudent step which had been taken. This lady bore his upbraidings patiently; she protested her ignorance of her daughter's intention of being privately united to Henry, yet it was of no avail. Frenzied with passion, he bade her be silent, and take to herself the blame she deserved.

Mrs. Dunbar had long been disciplined in the way of enduring what many Christians would have felt too hard to be borne; and she submitted, calmly, to the unkindness of this cruel husband and father. She sympathized deeply with Rebecca, on hearing the intention of her father; still, as far as herself was concerned, it was a cheering thought that it would still be in her power to comfort her sorrowing child, by those manifestations of maternal affection, which had already bound the heart of the grateful girl to her excellent mother.

Mrs. Dunbar felt that she was doing right whenever she could contrive to bring about an interview between Rebecca and Henry, and often did so. This young gentleman regarded her as a mother indeed, and cheerfully acquiesced in whatever she proposed, in regard to his young and amiable wife.

This young couple were advised to leave the place where the father of the lady resided, and settle quietly in some distant region; but neither of them were disposed to follow this advice. Henry was unwilling to separate Rebecca from her mother, who was at this time not only troubled on account of the situation of her beloved daughter, but was distressed on account of a painful separation from her only son, — a separation which at best would be long and afflictive to a mother's anxious heart, for he had left her and sailed to a foreign port, where the vessel would be obliged to run the risk of being captured by the Turks, who were at that time hostile to the United States. 'No,' said Henry, 'it would be cruel to deprive this excellent mother of a child like Rebecca, when she stands so much in need of her society. They can weep together, and thus soothe each other's feelings; besides, the health of Rebecca, I fear, is suffering from what she has already been called to endure, and she needs the tender care of her own dear mother.'

Henry judged rightly, in regard to the state of his wife's health. She was naturally frail, and the excitement of feeling she daily experienced, on account of her father's unkindness, rendered her health extremely delicate.

Days, weeks, and even months passed away, yet

Rebecca was not allowed to enter the presence of her offended parent. He gave orders for her to wait in her room until after he had taken his meals, so as to preclude the possibility of meeting her at table; and also forbade her entering the sitting-room, on any occasion.

No one believed that even old Mr. Dunbar was hard-hearted enough to cherish these unhappy feelings long, without relenting; but, contrary to the expectations of all who felt interested for this lovely daughter, he remained, month after month, inexorable; and even went so far as to forbid her mother, and other near friends, to mention the name of Henry, or Rebecca, in his hearing.

Mrs. Dunbar felt that her only refuge, in this extremity, was in drawing near to a covenant God in prayer. Faith whispered, 'all hearts are in the hand of a wonder-working Providence, a benevolent Creator delights to work by means, and can turn, in a moment, the stoutest heart from indulgence in sin.'

As this excellent woman saw the bloom of health upon the cheek of Rebecca exchanged for paleness, she feared that a heavier stroke than any she as yet had felt, was to be inflicted. Every means that maternal love could suggest, were employed to avert the threatened evil; still, in spite of each fond endeavor, it seemed constantly approaching, with rapid strides.

Rebecca was aware of the solicitude her friends felt respecting her, and she also realized that the state of her health was critical; yet strove to appear cheerful, that her mother might take encouragement, and hope for better things than those which she anticipated. The idea was ever present to Rebecca that she was living under her

father's displeasure; and this reflection, like a canker-worm, was sapping the foundation of life. She several times addressed him by letter, yet as often her letters were returned unopened; and her heart sunk within her, as the dreadful thought of her situation was for a moment indulged.

She might justly have consoled herself with the reflection that she had done her duty, as far as she was able, in striving to conciliate her offended father, and that he was now the sole aggressor; but such a thought was not sufficient to solace the acuteness of her feelings. She wanted her parent to become reconciled to her; or, at least, to treat Henry and herself with common-place civility.

'O, mother,' said she, one day, most earnestly, 'why does my father wish to destroy me! do tell me what he says to you about me!'

This was a hard question for a tender mother to answer, in the situation of Mrs. Dunbar, and she gave only an evasive reply; but her daughter was unsatisfied, and begged to know whether he had determined never again to see her. Her mother answered this inquiry by assuring her that she did not know. 'I hope,' said she, 'however, that his feelings will ere long change, as it respects you and Henry.'

Rebecca was ignorant of the fact that her father would not consent to hear her spoken of; and her mother thought it best she should remain so. She turned her attention, as soon as practicable, to other subjects. Mrs. Dunbar had experienced too much sorrow, on account of differing in her views and feelings from her money-loving husband,

not to be prepared to expect the worst on this occasion. More than once, had her companion, when offended with her for presuming to differ from him, in matters where a small sum of money was likely to be expended, if his wife did as she desired, not only harshly upbraided her at the moment, but refused to speak to her at all, for a number of weeks afterwards.

Wretched himself, he did all in his power to make others so; and he failed not to accomplish his diabolical purpose, in some degree. His servants disliked him, and had it not been for their attachment to his wife and family, they would have left him.

Henry, at the crisis referred to, was deeply tried. He had spent, by means of his mother-in-law, much time in the society of his wife; and the conviction, though most unwelcome to his mind, was forced upon him, that she was the subject of a fatal disease. She was naturally predisposed to consumption; and the intense anxiety of her feelings, during many months, had prematurely developed its symptoms in her system. This was visible to her friends, and acknowledged by herself.

They looked forward, however, to a change in her situation, with a faint hope that her health might be thereby improved. This hope, notwithstanding, was too flattering to be realized; the change took place, and still Rebecca was apparently fast tending towards the tomb. At this important and interesting crisis, Mrs. Dunbar presumed to acquaint her husband with the situation of his daughter. She had many times, ere this, alluded to the feeble state of Rebecca's health, when engaged in conversation with him; but as he had seemed invariably irritated, when

any mention was made of her, the mother had forborne to say what her feelings dictated.

When, on this occasion, he was informed by his wife that he was made the grandparent of a lovely little boy; and also that its mother was languishing beneath the power of disease, and hoped before leaving the world, to obtain the forgiveness of her father, the stern expression of the old gentleman's countenance relaxed for a moment. He sat silent for a short time, apparently lost in deep thought; then suddenly starting from his revery, he exclaimed, 'I will not forgive the girl in this way; and that child of Henry's shall not stay under my roof;' then, after a moment's reflection, said, 'I suppose I must allow so young a babe to remain with its mother; yet you will not,' continued he, addressing his wife, 'dupe me into a reconciliation with my undutiful daughter, by making whining, woman-like appeals to my feelings—I dare say she will recover, spite of all your mournful forebodings.'

Mrs. Dunbar wept silently, and was well-nigh disheartened in respect to realizing her fond wishes, that the heart of her companion would ever become softened towards his suffering, yet patient and lovely child.

The next time this fond mother saw Henry, which was upon the day following that on which she had this unpleasant interview with Mr. Dunbar, she communicated to him her feelings, in regard to the unrelenting course her husband still pursued.

Mrs. Dunbar had, as far as she possibly could, concealed the unnatural conduct of her companion from her acquaintance. She was aware that rumor's pliant tongue would send abroad the story of her family's misfortunes

quite soon enough, if she strove to keep it hid. A few chosen, and well-tried friends, were familiar with the humiliating truths she would gladly have forever veiled from the multitude, rightly judging, that among the mass there would not be wanting vulgar minds which would delight in indulging in idle speculations, in respect to the foibles of their fellow-beings; those, too, who would fain enhance the appearance of the evil they see, forgetting that they, too, are fallible, and may need the mantle of charity thrown over their own imperfections: with Pope, such may not say,

> 'Teach me to feel another's woe,
> To hide the fault I see;
> That mercy I to others show,
> That mercy show to me.'

Now, this excellent wife and mother felt that something more than she could do, must be tried, in order to effect the hitherto inexorable feelings of her husband. The idea that her dear daughter was to die in her father's house, and he not see her, was overwhelming. She suggested to Henry the propriety of informing the physician who attended Rebecca, of the facts relative to this unhappy affair, and of asking him to exert his influence with her father, in attempting to bring him to consent, at least, to see her.

This suggestion was thankfully received by Henry. It was a last resort; yet he felt encouraged to hope it would not fail. 'Mother,' said he, in answer to what Mrs. Dunbar had just proposed, 'why could not I have thought of this plan, as well as you? I was for giving up in despair,

while you were contriving means to remove the evil we so much deprecate!'

'We ought never to indulge despairing feelings, my son,' responded the mother, 'until we feel confident that every lawful means have been used to accomplish our purposes. I shrink,' continued Mrs. Dunbar, 'from the exposure that must be made of my husband's faults, in order to enlist the feelings of Doctor Felton in our favor. But still, I am persuaded it is a duty to adopt this course; and I want you, Henry, to find the doctor immediately, and request him to see Mr. Dunbar as soon as he can consistently.

Henry started instantly in pursuit of Doctor Felton, and was fortunate enough to find him at home. Henry had known this physician from childhood, and thoroughly understood his character. He confided to him, therefore, his sorrows, without reserve, and felt assured of the sympathy of this philanthropic gentleman, whose influence was extensively felt upon the side of virtue and religion.

Doctor Felton cheerfully promised to do all in his power to conciliate the wounded feelings of Mr. Dunbar. Said he to Henry, 'I suspected that there existed some peculiar cause for the expression of countenance which I have at times observed in Mrs. Dunbar, on first entering the sick-chamber of your wife, when that lady has been sitting at her bed-side. I have seen her under trying circumstances too often,' continued the doctor, 'to suspect that she would allow a gloominess of expression in her maternal features, to sadden the heart of her young and interesting daughter, if it was possible to prevent it. You, Henry,' proceeded the gentleman, 'have been for-

tunate in securing the esteem of one who seems to cultivate every right affection, as does your wife. I hope you feel grateful that you have been blest with her society for a short season in this world, where so little sincere and pure affection is to be found; but do not murmur, if she is soon removed to a more holy and exalted sphere in Heaven.'

'Then,' said Henry, almost interrupting the last expression, 'it is your decided opinion that Rebecca will not recover; do I rightly understand you to say so?'

'You do,' replied the physician; 'and I supposed you inferred that such was my opinion, before to-day.' 'I have,' answered Henry; 'but you know that we do not always draw correct inferences.' 'I am glad to hear you express your opinion plainly, though your doing so causes me pain.'

'I am aware of that fact,' said Doctor Felton; 'but you had better be prepared for this trial, than have it overtake you unexpectedly. I will, with the blessing of Heaven, which I feel it my duty to seek, do all I can to benefit your companion, not only as a medical attendant, but as a Christian friend. We may not linger longer here,' said he, 'for I must seek Mr. Dunbar immediately.'

On saying this, the doctor arose, and accompanied by Henry, left the house. They separated upon the doorstep. Doctor Felton walked towards the counting-room of old Mr. Dunbar, while Henry hastened to the chamber occupied by her whose society was ever dear to him, and, at this time, was inexpressibly sweet, for his youthful partner seemed to breathe the very atmosphere of Heaven. With the strong pinions of faith, she soared above

terrestrial objects, except when duty bade her fix her attention, for a little space, upon created things.

She regarded the babe with all a mother's affection. 'May it live before Thee, in a spiritual sense,' was the petition which, in the sincerity of her heart, she ardently sent up to Heaven, for the lovely little one that, to human appearance, was soon to be left motherless. Yet that benevolent Being, who 'seeth not as man seeth,' saw fit to remove this tender bud, to expand in a more genial clime, ere the chilling blasts of sorrow had passed over its fragile form. Sweet babe! it suffered little here, for gently was its frail tenement dissolved, after it had lived but a few days, and its deathless spirit forever set free from the thraldom of sin and woe.

But to return to Doctor Felton. He found the individual he sought, at his place of business, just preparing to go home, as it was near the hour at which he dined. The doctor took the hand of Mr. Dunbar in the most friendly manner, and said, 'My friend, my duty to you, as a man, and a Christian, requires me to be the bearer of painful tidings.'

'What tidings?' eagerly asked the other.

The doctor then, in the most feeling, and soul-moving manner, laid before this obdurate father the situation of Rebecca. Understanding the true character of the person he was addressing, he painted, in glowing colors, the misery that would be spared his dear family, if he would but go to that room of sickness, ere it would be too late, and bestow a father's forgiveness and benediction upon his dying child.

'Dying child!' repeated the old gentleman, faintly

sinking upon the seat he had left, just as the doctor entered his counting-room; 'it is true, then, that she is fatally sick, is it?' This he said, looking earnestly at the doctor.

'It is,' replied the pitying gentleman.

'No wonder, then,' said Mr. Dunbar, 'you thought it strange that you did not see me at any time in her chamber. I have felt vexed at the wilfulness of Rebecca, in marrying contrary to my wishes; but perhaps I have carried my resentment rather too far; yet I did not think she was so ill. Her mother has always been very tender of her, and I supposed she was over-anxious at this time.' Then looking earnestly at the doctor for a moment, he said, with much apparent emotion, 'I thank you, Doctor Felton, for the friendly interest you manifest in my family; I may have been wrong in appearing so stern to my poor child.'

'But you will not longer appear stern to her, will you?' asked the doctor, taking the old gentleman by the hand, and smiling affectionately as he addressed him.

'No, no,' replied the other, I must see her immediately.

Doctor Felton then bade him good morning, and withdrew. Mr. Dunbar soon after started for home. On entering the dining-room, he found dinner in waiting, and sat down to the table in company with his wife. He ate but little, being absorbed in deep reflection. Mrs. Dunbar did not venture to interrupt the silence of the occasion, though her heart was full to overflowing, and she longed to tell her companion all her anxieties, but did not dare to do so.

Just as she was rising from the table, to her surprise,

Mr. Dunbar inquired respecting the state of Rebecca. Mrs. Dunbar was quite overcome with intense emotion, for a few minutes. She had hoped for a change like that she saw, yet had hoped but faintly, and was unprepared to hear him speak thus. As soon as she could command her voice so as to be able to speak, she told her husband that their daughter was failing very fast.

The proud feelings of the father were now struggling with parental affection. It was a severe conflict. Pride, for one moment, whispered, 'I cannot condescend to enter the chamber of Rebecca, until a special message is brought from her to me.' Then a better feeling would predominate, and he would resolve to go at once to her bedside.

Mrs. Dunbar saw the conflict of her husband's feelings, depicted in his countenance, and she trembled less selfishness should again be allowed to triumph over a feeling more ennobling to his heart than that of wounded pride. Approaching near to him she said, in a mild yet affecting tone of voice, 'My dear husband, do go with me now to see your once dear daughter, lest you see her no more until her eyes are closed in death.'

'Once dear!' reiterated the sorrowful father, 'I love her now, and will go to her chamber this instant!'

'Stop a little while,' said his wife; 'I must acquaint Rebecca with your intention, else she will be too much overcome at seeing you under such circumstances, as her weakness is very great.'

'You are right,' responded the father; 'you must go and tell her that I desire an interview with her this afternoon.'

Mrs. Dunbar then left the room and ascended the

stairs. She entered the chamber of Rebecca with a feeling of excitement which she strove in vain to conceal—a commingled feeling of joy and gratitude. As soon as Henry caught a glimpse of her countenance, he felt assured that she had something pleasant to communicate, and quickly asked if Doctor Felton had been a successful advocate of their cause.

'I presume he has,' answered his mother, 'though I know not certainly that such is the fact, but I am greatly encouraged to hope that your father will yet be reconciled to Rebecca.'

As she said this, she perceived that the features of her daughter were illumined with a grateful smile. As she did not appear agitated, she then asked her if she thought she would be able to have an interview with her father, that evening, if he desired it.

'Certainly I shall, dear mother,' replied the affectionate daughter; 'but do you think he will consent to see me to-day? O, tell me if he has spoken upon the subject of seeing me!'

Her mother was apprehensive that the excitement which Rebecca must experience, in seeing her father, would hasten the hour of her approaching dissolution; yet longed to have them meet. At length, she ventured to tell her daughter that her father would like to see her.

'Ask him, then,' said Rebecca; 'ask him to come soon!'

Her mother bade her be composed, and assured her that her wishes should be complied with; 'but,' continued the now self-possessed lady, 'Henry had better leave the room, and not be seen here at this time.'

'I think,' said Henry, 'it will be best for me to retire, as my presence may be unwelcome, even now.' He left the room, and Mrs. Dunbar went directly down to ask her husband to accompany her to the bedside of their languishing child.

Mr. Dunbar entered the apartment of his lovely daughter with a faltering step; and as he drew near the bed upon which she reposed, and saw her pallid features, a sudden faintness came over him, and he sunk into a chair that was standing near the bed. Rebecca extended her emaciated hand towards her father. He drew nearer, and grasped it almost convulsively, while emotion choked his utterance. A long pause ensued, before either of them could speak.

Rebecca broke the silence by saying, 'Father, you will, you will be reconciled to me, will you not?'

'Yes,' responded the old gentleman—'I love you, my child—I cannot, O, I cannot part with you thus!'

Rebecca encircled his neck with her arms, and they both wept together. Mr. Dunbar, after a few moments, became more composed; and, as if suddenly recollecting that there was one absent who ought, at this interesting period, to be made welcome in this chamber, where were clustered so many motives for acting right, he said, 'Henry is not here, but he must not stay away, he must be sent for.'

'He shall be,' answered the mother of Rebecca; and immediately withdrew to send for him.

When the daughter heard this, to her, joyful determination of her father, thus kindly expressed, she regarded him with a grateful smile, that to him appeared ineffably

sweet. Being himself a stranger to the sustaining power of faith, the calm, lovely expression of Rebecca's countenance, seemed to his mind a matter of surprise.

'How,' said he to himself, 'can she be so very cheerful, under such trying circumstances; I am sure I could not be.'

While he was thus reflecting, Henry entered the room. The old gentleman, on perceiving him, arose, walked half way across the floor to meet him, and proffered his hand, while a tear ran silently down his cheek. Henry took the offered hand, and warmly pressed it. This was an expression of kindness that Mr. Dunbar felt was undeserved by him.

Henry, with much feeling, said, 'I thank my Heavenly Father that I have lived to see this hour.'

'You ought, in justice, to have seen a better hour, ere now,' said the agitated father; 'then would my dear lovely child have lived longer to bless her friends. O, I shall never forgive myself, for what I have done!'

'My dear father,' said Rebecca, in feeble, yet thrilling tone, 'I beg you will only remember any thing that you now regret having done, but as a sin against your best, your heavenly Friend. So far as Henry and myself are concerned, I feel that it is for our good that we should thus early be separated."

'O! that she might even now be spared,' said her father, addressing Henry.

'I have long prayed for her valuable life,' responded the son-in-law, 'but trust I have prayed in humble submission to the will of Him who delights to "temper the wind to the shorn lamb." He appears to think it best to

remove her to that world to which our darling little one has already gone.'

'That child,' said Mr. Dunbar, 'I never saw; would that it had been otherwise.' He was much affected, as a vivid recollection of the past flashed across his mind.

'Father,' said his lovely daughter, tenderly, 'forget the things that are behind, and strive to press forward, from this hour, in the path of duty, to that God to whom we all are so deeply indebted.'

'May it be so,' answered Mr. Dunbar.

The excitement occasioned by the soul-moving scene through which the invalid passed, that afternoon, greatly prostrated her strength; and when the kind Doctor Felton called to see his patient, in the evening of that day, he found her much exhausted. Yet while he deprecated the effect, he could not but feel thankful for the occurrence of the circumstances that had caused it. It was pleasant to his benevolent heart, to see the father, mother and husband of this youthful Christian, assembled together near her bedside, and to know, too, that they could now sympathize in each other's sorrows.

Mr. Dunbar left the chamber with the physician, and followed him to the outside door. He asked how long Rebecca might be expected to continue with them.

'Not many days at the longest,' said the doctor, 'she is sinking rapidly into the icy embrace of death. But,' he proceeded, 'she is closing her life most peacefully, and seems upborne by an invisible power. Her affections, I believe, are above.'

'Yes, that is true,' replied the afflicted father, 'what a blessing have I thrown from me.'

Dr. Felton, with a feeling of compassion, bade the old gentleman good evening, and walked away; while the other, overwhelmed with sorrow and self-reproach, sought and found a refuge from the observation of those around him in the retirement of his own chamber, where in the anguish of his spirit he knelt before his offended God. He prayed that he might become what he felt assured he must be in order to enter that sinless world to which his injured Rebecca was soon to be admitted.

The breast of Mrs. Dunbar was agitated by mingled emotions; joy and grief, at times, struggled hard to obtain the ascendency over each other; and it was some days after the events we have described, ere she was favored with her usual tranquility.

After the expiration of a week, during which Rebecca had every day been enabled to converse at short intervals with her father and other friends, he, with the other members of the family, was one night summoned to attend her dying bed. Mr. Dunbar gazed upon her changing features with a sorrow unknown to either of the other friends.

Rebecca's sister mourned most deeply that she was to lose one to whom she had ever been wont to look for counsel and sympathy. Rebecca had endeavored, during her last interviews with their father, to influence his mind in regard to his hitherto erroneous views upon the important subject of his children's marriage. She entreated him not to disregard real worth, in relation to the connec-

tion her sister might wish to form, merely because it was unaccompanied with wealth.

She had been favored with a patient hearing, whenever she had addressed him upon the subject; but now, as she was aware that her lips were soon to be closed forever, she availed herself of this last opportunity to intercede with him to spare her beloved sister a trial similar to that which she had herself endured.

'Dear father, promise me,' said she, with quivering lips, 'that you will not try to compel Jane to wed any one, merely because he is rich.' She paused.

'My child, my dear Rebecca,' said her father, kissing her affectionately, 'I will, I do promise not to do again as I have done to you.'

'Thank you, dear sir,' said Rebecca, at the same time kissing him. 'Do not think,' she faintly said, 'that I undervalue money; no, it is desirable in its place, 'but father, it is not *intrinsic* worth.'

The father's heart was moved, and whose would not have been, at such a scene? Her friends wept. On perceiving their tears, she bade them to cease to weep. 'Why mourn, because I am thus early called to my eternal home, to that mansion which Jesus has prepared for me above? Farewell,' continued she, 'farewell, my friends, yet not forever! I would have you all prepare to follow me to Heaven.' She said

'No more; the Angel of the Covenant
Was come, and faithful to his promise stood,
Prepared to walk with her thro' death's dark vale.'

CHAPTER XIV.

'Woes cluster; rare are solitary woes;
They love a train; they tread each other's heels.'
YOUNG.

James taken by the Turks — Money sent as a Ransom — Henry — James redeemed — His Return — Death of his mother — Henry and Jane — Friendship between Mr. Dunbar and Henry.

In a few days after the death of Rebecca, tidings were brought to her afflicted relatives that the vessel James had sailed in had been taken by the Turks, and James, among others of the passengers and crew, was carried a prisoner into Constantinople.

This painful intelligence filled the heart of both parents with indescribable woe, and the father felt it a stroke too heavy to be borne. He sunk under this weight of accumulated sorrow; and his wife, though deeply tried, was obliged to summon all her resolution to appear calm in his presence.

In this extremity, Henry was a comfort to the father of his sainted wife; and had it not been for the kindness of this excellent young man, who, forgetful of past wrongs, daily strove, by every method ingenuity could devise, to encourage the desponding feelings of the old gentleman, he would have been driven to despair.

As soon as Mr. Dunbar heard that his son was held a prisoner by this cruel nation, he sent to Constantinople a large sum of money, hoping to procure his release. This was all that it was possible for him to do, except to offer prayer to the God of nations that the ransom might be accepted, and his son returned, once more to bless his sight.

This last resort was not neglected; for Sabbath after Sabbath, during many long months, public prayer was offered in the church where the family worshipped, for this desired object. Days passed slowly; it seemed as if the weeks and months would never disappear, to his friends at home. The anxiety of this afflicted family led them to wish to learn whether the conditions proposed for the liberation of James would be accepted, yet they dreaded to hear from the city of his imprisonment, lest they should receive intelligence which would extinguish every ray of hope that they had presumed to cherish.

Dark forebodings constantly filled the mind of the father. He was naturally inclined to look upon the gloomy side of things, and on this occasion, was strongly disposed to despair.

The health of his wife was affected by what she endured on account of her departed daughter; and she was quite unprepared, in a physical point of view, to endure this new and severe trial. This excellent woman, however, sustained by the precious promises of the gospel, strove to lighten, if practicable, the sorrows of those dear ones by whom she was surrounded.

Henry was a great help to her in this arduous task; and his efforts, too, were the means of consolation to the

youthful Jane. Though young, she had early tasted of the bitter cup of affliction, and her buoyant spirit had been chastened and sweetly subdued.

She was ardently attached to her brother; and now that her beloved and only sister was removed from her society forever, in this world, she felt his absence to be a heavier trial than it had previously been.

His absence, under such circumstances too, was deprecated, not only by near relatives, but by all to whom the unfortunate young gentleman was known. He was the subject of conversation in every social circle in the place of his birth, and also made the subject of prayer by every Christian with whom he was acquainted. Many were the petitions offered for his safe and speedy deliverance from Turkish captivity.

The faith of Mrs. Dunbar was severely tested, in this prolonged season of trial. At times she was tempted to feel that it was of no avail to wait, in the exercise of humble submission, on Him who controls the affairs of mortals; but still, she was generally enabled to sustain her spirit by leaving her cares at the throne of grace. Thus she was made a solace to her husband, who, it was greatly feared, at times, would become a maniac.

Mrs. Dunbar felt her strength decay almost constantly, and resorted to the use of means to endeavor to benefit her health. Still, she complained not, but ever wore a smile of resignation upon her placid countenance.

Jane, however, was a quick observer of any change visible in her beloved mother. She saw the languor of her frame, which could not be concealed, and feared lest she was to be deprived of this excellent parent. She

hinted her fears to Henry, who, ever after the death of his amiable wife, had been a constant inmate of the family. He strove to dissipate her anxiety, by inspiring a hope that she might be deceived, while at the same time he was not free from a secret foreboding of the evil this affectionate daughter so much dreaded.

While there was much at home to divert the thoughts of Jane from the situation of her beloved brother; and she, weary with anxiety on his account, had just begun to allow the hope she had indulged of his return to ripen into something like expectation, unexpected news was brought from abroad that if a larger sum should be immediately sent out for his ransom, he would be suffered to return to his friends. The sum of ten thousand dollars was demanded. Mr. Dunbar, on receiving this information, resolved at once to pay it, without the least delay; though he murmured that he was obliged to do so.

Mrs. Dunbar encouraged him to feel grateful that he had it in his power to advance the sum; and begged him never to allow himself to think that twice, or even fifty times that amount was to be valued, when compared with the redemption of a beloved child from the worst of slavery.

'I don't want those tyrants to be gratified by receiving such an unreasonable demand,' said Mr. Dunbar.

'It is hard,' replied his companion, 'for human nature to submit to the endurance of wrong thus inflicted; but we should consider that wicked men are often allowed to chastise us, and we should strive to improve every such dispensation of a righteous Providence for our future good.'

'Such moralizing does not reconcile me to the loss I have so unjustly sustained,' responded the old gentleman; 'however, as I so much desire once more to behold our dear James, I could not withhold the amount, for to be deprived of both Rebecca and him is more than I can long endure.'

After the last remittance had been sent, confident hopes were entertained of the long-wished for return of the young man. His mother, however, scarcely dared to hope that she should be permitted again to see his beloved face; for she was sensible that she was the victim of a fatal disorder. She felt her strength decay more and more rapidly, as each successive week passed by, and it was evident to all that she was fast following Rebecca to the world of spirits.

The idea of death was not gloomy to her mind. Still, she fondly wished to live to behold once more her son, and prayed that she might be allowed this privilege. At times, it seemed that her frail life could not be prolonged until James could reach his home.

This was a trying crisis to each member of the family. The natural sternness of Mr. Dunbar was half subdued; and as he contemplated the breach made by death in the domestic circle, and looked forward to the prospect of his dwelling being again invaded by the grim messenger, and considered the possibility of never again meeting with James, he imagined himself the most miserable of men.

The society of Jane and Henry was regarded by the father of the former as indispensable to his comfort; and he was unwilling to have either of them absent from him, even for a short time. Strange as it may seem to some, the father went so far as to express a wish to his wife that

Henry might become the partner of their remaining daughter.

This fact was a great consolation to the mother, as was also the reflection that Jane would not be called to experience the displeasure of her only parent when she was gone; aware, too, that her happiness would be enhanced by a union with Henry, she was free from anxiety on her account. In the fulness of her soul she often said, in view of the future, that if she might gaze but once more upon the beloved features of her James, she should be fully satisfied.

She was obliged, however, to renounce the hope of realizing this fond and last earthly desire. She did so with much calmness, and for some time expected daily to be summoned to another world.

While the inmates of the dwelling of Mr. Dunbar were thus situated, James was crossing the mighty deep, on his way to his much longed-for home. He was ignorant of the early death of his beloved sister; and, although he knew that his father was opposed to having her receive the attentions of Henry, he did not even dream that he could have carried his aversion to her choice so far as he had done.

While on his voyage homeward, he thought much of the pleasure he should experience, in meeting this dear sister; for, next to the society of his mother, he valued that of Rebecca more than any other.

James was conscious of having endeavored to fulfil the important trust his father had reposed in him, as he had been commissioned to transact business for this parent; and he rejoiced much in view of the prospect of soon

embracing again each member of his beloved family. With a heart elate with anticipated happiness, this young man beheld the vessel, in which he was a passenger, nearing the wharf; and when it was safely moored, in the metropolis of his country, he sprang on the shore with a feeling of exulting joy, and, as soon as practicable, took a seat in a stage-coach that would carry him to his native place.

He was compelled to travel several days, ere he could reach home, and they seemed long days to him, — the very longest he ever spent during his life. Towards the close of the day upon which he ended his journey, his mind was filled with interesting reflections. He thought of the extatic emotion that would be felt by all his dear friends at Brookfield, when they should recognize his countenance, as he entered once more beneath the paternal roof.

Such thoughts were passing in his mind, as he came in sight of his father's house. By this time, it was early candle-light; and in a moment, on looking towards the stately mansion, he descried a light shining from a window in the chamber which his mother had always occupied before he left home. This sight was rather unusual in time of health, and he began to fear that either his father or mother must be ill. With this feeling, he alighted from the carriage, and while his baggage was being removed, he ascended the steps and opened the door.

Jane, who had heard the vechicle drive up to the house, ran into the entry, as soon as she heard the door open. The moment she saw James she ran to him, exclaiming — 'O! my brother! my dear, dear brother!' and put her arms around his neck.

Mr. Dunbar, hearing the exclamation of his daughter, hastened to welcome his long absent son. Henry also ran to meet him; and after this first greeting was over, the three friends led James into the dining-room, where supper was in readiness. Until this moment, the happy young man had not found opportunity to ask for his mother and eldest sister. Now turning to his father he enquired, 'Where is my mother? I saw a light in her room,' added he, 'but I hope she is not sick.'

'She is,' said his father, 'too feeble to come down; and after supper you can go up stairs; but not until she is aware of your return.'

'I cannot wait until I have eaten,' said James; 'do Jane, go and inform mother of my arrival now. I suppose,' he continued, 'Rebecca is in the chamber with her, and the time will seem a year until I am permitted to see them.'

'Come,' said his father, interrupting him, 'sit down at the table and take tea. You need refreshment; then we will all go up stairs together.'

James obeyed his father, at the same time renewing his enquiry relative to his absent sister. 'She is not in the house,' answered Mr. Dunbar.

'Then, where is she to-night?' eagerly asked James.

Henry replied with much emotion, 'We trust she is in Heaven.'

James dropped the spoon from which he was tasting tea; 'What, dead!' said he; 'gone, forever!'

His feelings permitted him to say no more. He covered his face with his handkerchief and wept for some minutes, after which, becoming somewhat composed, he

said, 'What would I not have sacrificed, to have been near her at the time of her death!' He proceeded saying, 'I hope my mother is not fatally ill.'

'She is very sick,' answered Henry.

'Does her physician fear that she will not recover,' enquired James.

'He does,' said Henry.

'I am glad, then,' said the other, 'that I have been permitted to arrive ere she too was forever buried from my sight.'

Jane now left the three friends below, while she went to acquaint her mother of the return of James. She found Mrs. Dunbar anxious to know who had arrived, as she had heard the sound of voices below in the entry, and the nurse had informed her that a gentleman had alighted from a stage-coach at the door.

Her attendant had never seen James, and Mrs. Dunbar had listened in almost breathless silence, hoping to hear the sound of approaching footsteps; and when, after the delay mentioned, she saw Jane enter the room, she said, while her countenance beamed with animation, 'Has James arrived?'

'He has,' replied her daughter, 'and I had come to inform you of the fact, before he came himself.'

'I suspected from what I had heard, that it was he who came in just now; but why does he not come to see me?' asked the mother.

'Father thought it best he should wait awhile,' said Jane; 'but here he is now,' added she, at the same moment stepping aside to enable James to advance to the bedside of his mother.

'Mother, dear mother,' said he, 'I rejoice to see you, though I grieve to find you in this situation.'

His mother spoke not, but threw her arms around the neck of her son. After a short silence, she said, 'I feel grateful for this privilege; truly God *does* hear and answer prayer.'

She then bade James sit down near her, and relate the circumstances through which he had passed during his absence. He soon obeyed, so far as to be seated near her pillow, but forbore to enter into a detailed relation of the events that had occurred since he left home.

'Mother,' said he, taking her hand affectionately, 'I can only say that a merciful Providence has sustained me through trying seasons, but I would rather not review the past, minutely, to night; for I fear you are too feeble to endure the excitement it would cause, were I to comply with your wishes. You may be assured that I have abundant reason for gratitude,' said James with evident emotion, 'but it distresses me to think that I am soon to be deprived of the society of my dear and valued mother. I cannot endure the thought!'

'Submit, my son, to the will of Heaven,' said his mother, in a feeble tone; 'submit cheerfully, not as those who feel that resistance is vain. I love,' continued this exemplary individual, 'to feel that myself and all dear to me are at the disposal of Infinite Wisdom; while I would call upon my soul, and all within me, to bless the Lord for His great goodness, in permitting me once more to behold your face, ere I depart.'

Mrs. Dunbar was quite overcome with the exertion she

had made; and her friends withdrew for awhile from her apartment, in order that she might obtain repose.

James descended to the parlor in company with his father and Henry, while Jane retired to a part of the room remote from her mother, and there sat down to wait until that dear parent should call for her. The buoyant spirits of James sunk, in prospect of the trial he must soon experience; his heart was pained, also, at his diappointment, in not beholding Rebecca; and he sat down and wept long, ere his troubled feelings became composed.

His friends sympathized too deeply in his sorrow to interrupt this expression of his woe, and permitted him to give full vent to his feelings. They conversed but little ere the hour for retiring to rest arrived, and then separated for the night.

Just as the morning light began to illumine the eastern horizon, these friends were summoned from their chambers to gaze for the last time upon the departing wife and mother. The family soon assembled around the bed of death. It was a calm, a holy scene, such as it may be imagined angels love to look upon.

The dying woman pressed the hand of each dear friend, and bade them a kind farewell. She continued long to grasp the hand of James, who was greatly affected.

'Do not grieve thus,' said she, 'my son, that I am to be separated from you for a season. Weep only for your sins, and follow me to the holy rest of a sinless eternity.'

As her respiration became increasingly difficult, she said but little more, yet that little was expressive of the sweet peace of soul promised to all whose minds are stayed on God. Then, with a smile beaming from her features,

she ceased to breathe. Her ransomed spirit took its flight to the world beyond the skies, leaving her friends to mourn, as well they might, a loss that was irreparable.

It was long ere James was enabled to submit, patiently, to the trial occasioned by the removal from earth of his two dearest earthly friends. Still he was unacquainted with the thrilling facts connected with the sickness and death of Rebecca. None felt willing to rehearse the faults of the father to this son; and he never knew more upon this unpleasant subject than that this parent for a time opposed her cultivating an acquaintance with Henry. Now, he rejoiced in view of the fact that one so deserving as Henry, was likely, for the future, to make one of their domestic circle.

He was aware that a change had been wrought in the views and feelings of his father, yet dreamed not of the means by which it had been accomplished.

At different times, James mentioned circumstances relative to what occurred during his afflicting absence from his friends, from which they gathered enough to form an outline of the history of that eventful period in his life.

From some cause, he ever shrunk from going into detail in describing his sufferings while in prison, for he would gladly have had these distressing recollections blotted from the page of his memory forever. His friends forbore to question him upon this painful subject, yet they learned that he had been subjected to the most cruel treatment at the hands of the Turks—that the prison in which he had been incarcerated was one of the most loathsome—that he had suffered for want of food and of pure water, but most

of all, from fear lest he should suddenly be dragged forth from his imprisonment, to be executed in some torturing manner.

His unfeeling foes seemed to delight themselves in keeping him constantly in racking suspense, in regard to the measures that were to be adopted by their government concerning himself and the other unfortunate victims of their cruelty. His jailer informed him, soon after his incarceration in the gloomy place where he spent many wearisome months, that a rumor had reached the Sultan that his father was wealthy, and it was very probable that for this reason he would not be put to death.

This intelligence did not allay the fears of James that he might die a cruel death, inflicted by these merciless tyrants; still, it afforded a gleam of hope that he might possibly be set free from bondage. His joy, as will be supposed, was unbounded, when information was brought him, while yet in prison, that his father had ransomed him from his dreadful situation; and when he found himself in reality at liberty to walk abroad and inhale the pure air of heaven, he could scarcely realize that he was not dreaming.

Unmingled emotions of pleasure pervaded his mind while on his way home, until his fears were aroused by seeing a light from the window of his mother's room.

James often, after the occurrence of these events, affirmed that he felt that it was well his dream of earthly bliss was at this time broken by disappointment at finding so great a change at home, for if it had been otherwise, he should have been satisfied with earth, and allowed his affections to remain wedded to perishable objects.

Now he was induced, by every loved consideration, to live constantly in a state of preparation for a brighter world than this.

Not many months after the death of Mrs. Dunbar, Henry and Jane were united in wedlock. James took the place of his father in business, so far as to release the old gentleman from most of his cares; still, as the love of gold was not quite extinguished in the breast of this individual, he could not forego the pleasure afforded by striving, even in advanced life, to heap up riches for the sake of possessing them.

Henry and Jane remained in the same family with Mr. Dunbar and James; and the father even urged Henry to engage in business with himself and James. He did so; and this family long dwelt in comparative happiness together. A shade of gloom, however, was cast around their dwelling, at times, by the moodiness of the father; for his natural disposition was never entirely subdued. But it is hoped that his example, and the unhappy consequences of his conduct, will long serve as a beacon to others, who like him are disposed to indulge the sin of avarice.

It is believed that the influence of Mrs. Dunbar and her lovely daughter, was a blessing, as far as it was felt. Many were the friends who referred to their example, as a guide that might safely be followed.

CHAPTER XV.

Mrs. Nelson — Simon and Benjamin — Death of Mrs. Nelson — Mr. Dalby — Unfortunate Abby.

It will be recollected by the reader, that when Mrs. Nelson was last mentioned, she was enjoying the society of a friend who ardently desired to have the noble faculties of her unfortunate sister employed in the pursuit of better objects than they had been hitherto.

Mrs. Nelson, she was aware, had been chastened, and doubtless the design of her trials had been her improvement; still, as she had ever perverted the end for which they were designed, Mrs. Coleman wished to make her feel that she was under obligations to do all in her power to make some little amends for her past neglect of duty.

This excellent lady was continually urging Mrs. Nelson to erect a higher standard of duty, and to aim constantly to reach it. 'Do not,' she would often say to her sister, 'consume so much time in musing upon the past. Wherein you have failed in respect to duty, resolve in future to do differently; you cannot alter what has taken place, and it only aggravates trouble to dwell upon it needlessly.'

About this time the only remaining son of Mrs. Nelson who went abroad upon business, was one day accosted by a stranger, while passing through the street of a distant

city, who familiarly called him by name. The young gentleman, surprised at the salutation, said to the person who addressed him, 'You have the advantage of me, sir, for I do not recollect ever having seen you.'

'Is not your name Simon Savage?' inquired the stranger.

'Not Simon, though you have judged rightly in regard to my other name; but where,' asked the young man, anxiously, 'did you ever meet with Simon Savage?'

'I knew him,' replied the gentleman, 'in this city, some years ago. He sailed out of this port in a ship bound to the Pacific ocean; but as neither the vessel, nor any one on board of her has ever been heard from, it has long been supposed that she must have sunk at sea, and her crew all have found a grave in the ocean. You may think I was not a little surprised,' continued he, 'at meeting you here. Was Simon Savage your brother? you certainly bear a very strong resemblance to that young gentleman?'

'I had a brother of that name,' answered the young Mr. Savage, 'and from the circumstances under which he left home, I am led to suppose it was he with whom you were acquainted. My brother has been absent many years, and his friends have not been able to learn anything respecting his probable fate; but from what you have just related, I presume it may safely be infered that he long since found a watery grave.'

The gentleman with whom he was conversing, having a feeling heart, seemed to regret that he had unconsciously been the means of giving a fellow-being pain, and expressed this feeling to the young man.

Mr. Savage thanked him for the communication he had made, as it would, he said, in a great measure, relieve that distressing feeling of suspense which his friends had so long endured on account of this absent one.

As soon as an opportunity presented, the young man wrote to his mother, and acquainted her with what he had so providentially heard, respecting Simon. This lady grieved at the intelligence he communicated; yet, as she affirmed with feeling, it was less distressing to know, or to have reason to believe that her son was dead, than to be tortured with suspense in regard to his condition.

Ever after receiving the letter containing this account, she regarded Simon as buried forever from her sight, and felt free from any apprehension on account of his suffering in some far-off region from his friends.

Not long after these occurrences, the son of Mrs. Nelson returned to the home of his mother. He related an incident that occurred while he was absent, which led both himself and mother to suspect that Benjamin was living, in the southern part of this country.

A gentleman had lately removed from an unknown region to a situation near the eastern margin of the Mississippi. No one was acquainted with him, or could conjecture where he had formerly belonged.

As young Mr. Savage was one day near the place of the stranger's residence, this gentleman was pointed out to him, when in a moment he was sure he recognized the well-remembered features of his brother Benjamin. He did not mention this truth to any one, but secretly resolved to call upon him, privately, as he lived in retirement, and learn his name.

The next day he executed this resolve, and obtained the desired interview. It was, however, unsatisfactory to Mr. Savage, for the stranger called himself by a name unknown to the family of Mrs. Nelson; besides, he was unwilling to communicate the name of any of his friends; but it was evident to the young man, that whoever this individual might be, he had assumed a false name.

Every question Mr. Savage ventured to ask, concerning his family, was answered evasively; and he avoided looking the young man full in the face. Mr. Savage attentively regarded the expression of the countenance of the strange gentleman, and saw it was painful. After sitting long enough to feel convinced that he should gain no more by remaining longer, he rose to depart.

As he was leaving the house, he said to the gentleman, 'When I saw you yesterday, I thought you must be my brother, you resemble him so strongly; but you say your name is not Benjamin ——.' By this time they had reached the door and opened it, when, without giving his visitor an opportunity to finish the sentence he had begun to utter, with manifest emotion he bade him adieu, and turned from him.

Mr. Savage did not relate this circumstance to any one except his own family; but they conjectured that Benjamin must have been driven, by something of an unpleasant nature, to resort to this mysterious manner of living, and gladly would have forgotten this painful occurrence, could they have done so.

Mrs. Nelson grieved for her absent Benjamin, during the remainder of her life; but no other tidings concerning him ever reached his friends. It was always believed by

the family, that the strange gentleman at the South was their relative, and they took a lively interest in his welfare; but he never would have any communication with any one connected with the family, after the occurrence of the interview we have mentioned.

Mrs. Nelson lived some years after this, and it was emphatically true of her, that her *last days were her best days;* for she was permitted to enjoy that peace which alone flows from a confident trust in our Heavenly Father. She thanked him for all the trials she had endured, as she approached the close of her earthly pilgrimage, often remarking, with a feeling of gratitude, 'I could never have been prepared for heaven without affliction: God knew what was best for me.' She closed her eyes forever upon sublunary objects, with a bright hope of future blessedness beyond the grave.

Mrs. Coleman survived her sister a few years, and to the end of life continued to be a means of good to all who came within the sphere of her influence.

Little, worthy of particular notice, occurred in the history of her children, their lives being spent usefully and tranquilly. Like the family of Mrs. Howe, they did much for the good of their fellow-beings, and left a good name behind them, which, as the wise man has said, 'is better than precious ointment.'

The reader will now take leave of these members of the family, in which many traits of character have already been delineated, and become acquainted with some circumstances immediately connected with the history of others belonging to the same family. One of the parties was a sister of the persons to whom we have just bid adieu.

Mrs. Dalby, little of whose early history is known to the writer, was settled at the time of her marriage, near the town of Brookfield, the native place of Mr. Weldron and his family. There was nothing strikingly noticeable known of her or her household, except the fact that their children, and they had several, all died while they were young.

This was a severe affliction to these fond parents; and ever after the death of the second child, Mrs. Dalby was strongly disposed to indulge a melancholy temper of mind. After the birth of the fifth, which was a daughter, she was encouraged to hope it might be spared to her maternal affection, and felt cheered by the thought. The babe was entrusted to a faithful nurse, who kept it most of the time in an apartment separate from the room its mother occupied.

Just about the time these events took place, a female called one evening at the house, and asked permission to spend the night. Her countenance was pale, and she had in her arms a very young babe.

Mr. Dalby was sure that it would be the wish of his wife to have her remain, and bade her welcome to stop during the night. When she took off her bonnet, he was shocked at her feeble appearance.

'How old is your babe?' inquired Mr. D.

'It is only a week old,' answered the young and feeble mother, and then burst into tears.

'Only one week old,' repeated Mr. Dalby, 'and you a traveller too?'

'It is true,' replied the other, 'but I am a most unfortunate individual.'

'Have you parents?' asked the gentleman.

'No,' responded the weeping girl, 'I am an orphan. have not for many years known what it was to enjoy the onfidence and affection of such dear, dear friends.'

Mr. Dalby forbore to say any more to the distressed oung creature at that time, but immediately requested a ady who had long been an inmate of his family, to onduct her to a comfortable room, where she might lie lown immediately, as her weakness, he thought, was too great to admit of her sitting up longer without injury.

He requested the lady, and other members of the amily, to forbear mentioning the arrival of their strange guest to his wife for a time, lest her sympathy for the oor girl should produce too great an excitement of mind o be borne, in her feeble state. The family agreed to comply with his wishes; and the lady referred to went lirectly to the room where the young female was sitting, o follow the suggestion of Mr. Dalby respecting her.

On entering the room, this lady was struck with the nteresting, yet pallid countenance of the young stranger. After accosting her in a kind manner, she took the babe n her arms, and bade its mother follow her. She led her o a warm apartment, (for the weather at that time was quite cold, being November,) and assisted her to retire to ed with her child, after which she carried her some refreshment, which was most grateful to this lonely one.

The feelings of the lady were much interested in behalf of the stranger. After leaving her room, she remarked o Mr. Dalby, that she believed he never would regret aving befriended this poor child of sorrow.

'I believe,' said Mr. Dalby, 'that no one ever has cause

to regret the performance of a charitable action; and certainly, whatever may be the character of this person, she is entitled, to-night, to our pity.'

During that night, there was an alarming change in the infant of Mrs. Dalby, and well-grounded fears were entertained that it could not live long. This fact, however, was not communicated to its mother, because the physician was apprehensive that a knowledge of it would injure her. The idea occurred to the mind of Mr. Dalby, that if his own darling little one must die, it would be well, for a time at least, to allow its mother to remain ignorant of the fact, if possible; consequently, he determined to request the stranger who had been providentially directed to their dwelling on that evening, to permit her babe to be placed under the care of his wife.

This gentleman made known to the lady before mentioned, his intentions, and engaged her to assist him in the affair. The child of the stranger was a daughter; its complexion like that of the infant of Mrs. Dalby, and it was hoped that as she had seen her own babe but little, and that, too, in a darkened room, she would not perceive the difference at all,—or, if ever, not until after her recovery.

As was feared, the little one died. As soon as it was gone, the nurse, in company with Mr. Dalby, went to the room the young female occupied, and the gentleman made known to her his wishes respecting her child. She was affected to tears while he was speaking; and in answer to an inquiry made by him, if she had any objections to having her little one taken to his wife, she said, 'O no! it

will be a great mercy to me to have it thus provided for, during even a short season.'

The helpless little stranger was immediately attired in clothes belonging to Mrs. Dalby's child, and then carried to the room in which the other had been taken care of. When it was presented to the mother, she did not appear to notice the change, and her husband, while he felt deeply the loss of his child, rejoiced that its mother was likely to be spared the trial it would occasion her to know that she was again childless. As the dead babe was very young, it was thought unnecessary to have the ceremony of a funeral, and the little one was quietly laid to rest beneath the cold clods of earth, without exciting the suspicion of the mother that anything unusual had occurred in the house.

On the morning following the night upon which the unfortunate female had stopped at the house of Mr. Dalby, she was found too feeble to arise. It was evident that she had been the victim of unkindness. No words could express the gratitude she felt for the attention she received at the hands of these new friends, and she longed to confide to them the story of her life.

Mr. Dalby requested the physician of his wife to attend the sufferer, and that gentleman informed him that she was the subject of an inflammation brought on by cold and over exertion. It was some time, although the best means were employed to arrest the progress of the disease, ere it yielded to the influence of medicine. For many days the life of the poor girl was in imminent danger; and when, at the expiration of a month, she was able to leave

her bed, during a greater part of the day, her benefactors rejoiced to see the pleasing change.

But it was otherwise with the lonely stranger. She felt that earth was destitute of charms for her; parentless and homeless, she would have been glad could she have been taken from the world during her illness, had she not remembered that she was now the mother of an innocent, though unfortunate child.

The reader may feel anxious to know if the poor infant had a father living; and if so, may wish to know who and where he was, at this interesting period.

In answer to such an inquiry, we would state that it had such a parent; but he was one who deserved not the name of father. In another chapter, more will be told respecting this individual, in connection with the circumstances which reduced this poor girl to her present situation.

The name of this lone one was Abby; and as her strength returned, she related her past history to the friends whom she had learned to love, even after she had thought, in the despondency of her heart, that she could never confide in a human being again. She dreaded the arrival of the time when she must leave these kind friends, yet felt that it was duty to strive to do all in her power to hasten her recovery.

As soon as she was able to sit up a short time, her babe was every day brought for her to look upon.

This act of deceiving Mrs. Dalby, will doubtless be approved by many. There are those who believe it right to 'cheat another into his benefit,' and such will approve the plan followed by Mr. Dalby; but the writer cannot

but think the propriety of such a course questionable. It seems like a distrust of the wisdom of our Heavenly Father, to resort to stratagem, in order that the events of his ever kind Providence should be concealed from the subjects of his government, lest they should sink beneath their afflictions. In this case, at least, it would have been decidedly better to have acted openly in the affair, and to have entrusted the event to God.

Mrs. Dalby was aware of the cause of the recent illness of Abby, but supposed her infant dead, as no one informed her to the contrary; and her feelings were deeply interested in behalf of the unfortunate girl. There was an air of simplicity in her manners, which appeared entirely free from affectation, and won the confidence of this lady, upon a very short acquaintance.

Mrs. Dalby suggested to her companion the idea of her remaining in their family. She had heard from the lips of the poor girl, the touching story of her life; and had had this statement confirmed by the testimony of those who had known her from a child, and had resided near her relatives, who lived about three miles distant from the place of Mrs. Dalby's residence.

The husband of this lady was as much disposed to benefit this forlorn one, as she was; yet he was fearful that if she remained long with them, she might betray the truth in regard to the infant, and he felt every day more desirous of having it concealed. His feelings were an illustration of the truth, that wrong actions, no matter how good the motive may be, always involve fear. It is never safe to do evil that good may come.

If Mrs. Dalby had been permitted to know that he

child had been removed by death, and that another had been providentially thrown upon the protection of herself and husband near the time of the departure of their own little one, she would, doubtless, have felt a lively interest, under such peculiar circumstances, in the welfare of the little dependent stranger, and, probably, would have adopted it at once as her own. Had she done so, it would have been much better, as the sequel of this story will show.

Mr. Dalby thought it would be best to befriend poor Abby, in procuring her a pleasant home, a few miles distant from them, where they could continue to watch over her and she might feel assured of their friendship.

'But why not employ her here at home, in doing such light work as her health will admit of her performing?' asked Mrs. Dalby; 'I shall need her services very much, and am sure we could do her a great deal more good by letting her become a member of our own family, for a while at least, than by sending her among strangers. I feel,' said Mrs. Dalby, 'that she is entitled to our confidence; and I am really attached to the poor unfortunate girl. Let her go and stop a short time among our relatives. Our sister Crosby needs her, and will be a mother to her, you know.'

'That is true,' replied his companion; 'and Abby may be happier with her than she could be remaining with us; and these considerations will help me to give her up somewhat cheerfully, though I would like to have her remain with me.'

Abby, with a child-like confidence that endeared her

increasingly to these kind friends, asked counsel relative to the course it would be best to pursue, in regard to the future.

Said she; 'I am so deeply indebted to your generosity, that I feel really burdened, and long to be enabled to make you some return. As to paying you,' proceeded the grateful girl, 'that would be impossible; there could not be an equivalent found below the skies for such kindness as I have received at your hands.'

'We do not want pay, Abby,' said Mr. Dalby, 'for any service we have rendered you; it will be reward enough for us to know, as I trust we shall, that you henceforth walk carefully along that safe and pleasant path that leads to life.

'I am determined,' responded Abby, while tears ran down her cheeks, 'ever to strive earnestly to do right; still, I am aware that I must depend upon Infinite strength to help me. I have learned, from sad experience, that I am a most dependent being.'

'We all ought to feel this truth constantly,' replied Mrs. Dalby, 'as our only security from the power of any temptation, is in looking constantly above this world for assistance, in our struggles with sin. The poet says,

"Lean not on earth, 't will pierce thee to the heart;"

and all have felt this true, that have leaned at all upon themselves.'

Mrs. Dalby acquainted Abby with the intentions of her husband concerning her. On receiving the intelligence, she was almost overjoyed.

'Now,' said the poor girl, 'I shall no longer feel myself

an outcast — O, I can never be half thankful enough to you for your great kindness to me!'

'Receive it as a blessing from your Father in Heaven,' said her benefactress; 'we are only his stewards.'

Not long after this conversation took place, Abby left the hospitable friends who had comforted her in the season of her greatest extremity. She quitted their dwelling with a full heart, accompanied by the lady with whom she was to reside, in an adjacent village.

Mrs. Crosby, who was to be the future protector of Abby, had been informed of the situation and prospects of the lonely orphan, and felt herself called upon to befriend her; consequently, she had, as early as possible, after hearing of this interesting stranger, repaired to the home of her relatives, in order to convey the grateful girl to her own house.'

The writer has promised to give the reader more of the history of poor Abby, and will endeavor to fulfil that promise in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVI.

Forsaken Orphan — Col. Chambers — Cruel Desertion — Abby Forsaken by relatives — Mrs. Dalby — Mrs. Dalby deceived in regard to the death of her child—Death of Abby.

THE parents of Abby were in humble circumstances; but they were respectable, and endeavored to educate their children as well as they were able. Indeed, they made great efforts to give them the advantages which many people in straitened circumstances, would have thought it impossible to give them.

These parents placed a proper value upon mental culture, and therefore felt that they would be unjust to their offspring to withhold from them any means of improvement that were possibly attainable by them.

It is not certainly known to the writer whether Abby was the eldest daughter, but it is believed that she was; and she was the almost constant companion of her mother, as long as that parent lived. But it was the misfortune of the poor girl to lose her mother at a tender age, just as she had begun to realize her worth; and also to part with her father, ere she arrived at the age of fourteen.

After the death of their parents, these children were indeed left alone in this unfeeling world; for, though they had relatives, they were persons who regarded the orphans

with a sort of vulgar jealousy, from the fact that the taste of their parents had led them to adopt a different course with their children from what these persons approved. They could not really find fault with the manner in which these helpless ones had been taught, because they had learned to be frugal and industrious, and strove to conduct in such a manner as to gain the good will of the virtuous.

They had also been instructed by their father, just before he died, to strive to keep together, if possible, in one family; but if they could not do this, to be often in each other's society, and cultivate that strong affection for each other, which brothers and sisters ought to feel. They obeyed this injunction of their departed parent, and were much together, until some of them were unavoidably scattered abroad, and others removed by the hand of death.

Abby was left quite alone, and she accepted of an invitation to reside in the family of her uncle. She was not happy in this new situation, being very unlike the family of this relative; but she endeavored to make the best of her condition, and the buoyancy of youth enabled her to cast aside care, for the most part; yet there were sober moments when a sense of loneliness pervaded her young heart, while she reflected that there was not one in the house with her, to whom she could unbosom her feelings without restraint.

It was about this time that she was introduced to Col. Chambers, an officer in the United States Army. He was a gentleman every way calculated to gain the good will of a young, confiding girl. He whispered pleasant things to her, and she believed that all he affirmed was true. It never occurred to her ingenuous mind that he could prove perfidious.

The family of her uncle encouraged the Colonel in visiting Abby. They were anxious to get rid of her, as they often said, and hoped the Colonel would conclude to take her away with him.

These relatives appeared quite indifferent as to the character of the person whom they allowed to be much alone with the interesting orphan. Poor child! never had there been a time, since the death of her beloved mother, that she had so much needed the admonitions and restraint of this invaluable parent.

Her naturally affectionate disposition exposed her to temptations, by leading her to overlook the many faults visible to an unprejudiced observer, in the character of Colonel Chambers. She was blind to all his faults; and as expressions of kindness, in her present situation, were new to her, she was captivated with his society, and imagined herself perfectly happy as the object of his peculiar regard. Mistaken girl! it was not long ere she could from experience, adopt the sentiment of the poet, who has said,

> 'Bliss! sublunary bliss! proud words, and vain!
> Implicit treason to divine decree!
> A bold invasion of the rights of Heaven!
> I clasped the phantoms, and I found them air;
> O, had I weighed it ere my fond embrace,
> What darts of agony had missed my heart!'

Things passed on pleasantly, for some time, with the infatuated girl; and she dreamed not that a sad change was to pass over her earthly prospects — that her brightest hopes were soon to be blighted, and her confiding heart made to bleed at the remembrance of the hours which

now flew to her as on eagle's wings; — yet such was the painful fact.

Abby was informed that Colonel Chambers was known to be attentive to a young lady of much higher pretensions than herself, at the same time he was visiting her; but she could not, and would not believe such an assertion.

'It must be a mistake,' she said.

She stated what she had heard to the Colonel, at his next visit, when he, with much *sang froid*, assured her that any such report was entirely unfounded. 'You are not willing to believe me a villain, I hope, Abby,' said he to the credulous girl.

'Certainly not,' replied she.; 'if you say that you do not pay particular attention to any one but myself, I believe you.'

'Certainly, I can say so,' responded the Colonel; 'but I think you cannot place much confidence in me, thus to appear to credit a report so much against me as that you have named at this time.'

The effect of this artful remark upon poor Abby was just what this wicked man designed it to be; it enlisted her sympathy more deeply than ever in his behalf, and she reproached herself for having one moment indulged the thought, that it was possible for so seemingly kind a friend to prove false.

Months passed, after the occurrence of this circumstance, in which the regard this credulous girl felt for the worthless Colonel, increased constantly. The family of her uncle congratulated themselves upon the prospect of having their niece settled respectably, because they imagined it would be creditable to themselves, but not on account of

their interest for Abby. The idea of being allied, though remotely, to a family like that of Colonel Chambers, was esteemed by these persons an honor; and their feelings in respect to this subject, made them treat their poor relative with a little more civility than they had hitherto done.

The Colonel had promised to unite his destiny with that of Abby, soon after they became acquainted; and since that time, had spoken of having a day appointed for their union, yet never had gone so far as to fix upon any definite time for the event to take place. Sometimes the victim of his duplicity wondered that he thus delayed the consummation, as she thought, of their fondest wishes; but she ventured not to hint her thoughts to him, having too much delicacy of feeling to do so, and being too proud to appear anxious to urge her claims upon his integrity and generosity.

As things were remaining thus, an individual one day called upon Abby and her friends, and informed them that the intentions of marriage had been published at a church in an adjoining parish, between Colonel Chambers and a young lady, who, as had been reported before, he had for some months visited.

'It cannot be,' said Abby; 'it must be you are deceived —I will not believe him false.'

'I do n't know anything in regard to his being false,' replied the person who had brought this unwelcome intelligence, 'but I do know that I saw his name published with that of this lady at the entrance of the church, yesterday, and it remained public during the day, so that

I supposed it safe to infer that he intends to be married to her.'

Abby turned pale, but made no reply. Her uncle's wife, quite disturbed, remarked that the affair must be investigated. 'He was here and drank tea with us only last week,' continued the lady, 'and at that time expressed his intention of taking Abby away from us soon.'

'There is something mysterious in respect to his conduct, certainly,' answered the visitor, 'but he is a young gentleman of the world, you know, and perhaps has never been serious concerning his pretensions of regard for Abby;—young men do not always mean what they say young girls.'

'Not serious,' repeated the trembling girl; 'how could I believe him otherwise? he always appeared sincere.'

'Has he ever promised to make you his wife, Abby?' asked this individual.

'Yes, many, many times,' responded Abby.

'But have you a written promise of that kind?' asked the other.

'No,' said the unfortunate girl.

'Then,' said the officious acquaintance, 'the less you say about the affair the better; for you will be ridiculed enough, if you say not a word, for having believed him serious in his attentions to you.'

Abby made no reply to this unfeeling remark, but soon after left the room and sought the solitude of her own chamber, that she might give vent to the agony of her soul in tears. After having wept for some time, the thought suddenly crossed her mind that her informer might be an

enemy to Colonel Chambers, and desire to injure him, and this motive perhaps had governed her in the representations she had made; for the poor girl shuddered to believe that the person to whom she had betrayed the weakness of her character, and confided her happiness for this life, could prove treacherous; but it was even so,

> 'For he a chosen villain was at heart,
> And capable of deeds that durst not seek
> Repentance.'

The uncle of Abby sent immediately to Colonel Chambers, and requested him to call upon his family without delay. In answer to this message, the Colonel sent a note, addressed to Abby, in which he told her that it was his duty to inform her that circumstances he could not then control, had laid him under obligations to allow the lady to whom he expected soon to be united, to be called by his name, and added, 'My inclinations would lead me to act differently from what I am forced to, on account of the character and standing of Mary's father. I dare not leave her to be united to you, though I know I could be more happy with you, than with this heartless girl. I regret the past,' continued he, 'so far as your happiness will be affected, for I am sure that you have far too much regard for me; — try to forget that you ever saw me.'

In this note he inclosed a small sum of money, which he said perhaps Abby might find it necessary to use. He closed abruptly, by begging her to think of him no more from that moment.

When the communication arrived, and Abby was sum-

moned from her room to open it, she struggled vainly to conceal her emotions, as she read the words so fatal to her peace, and her distress was augmented by being obliged to submit the billet to the perusal of her uncle. This she did with great reluctance, as she was aware that he would infer from it a humiliating truth which she wished longer to keep concealed.

After her uncle had read the brief letter to his family, poor Abby, instead of being favored with their sympathy, was forced to bear the keenest reproaches from these relatives. Her aunt told her tauntingly, that she was not willing to be disgraced by having her remain under her roof. 'You must make up your mind to seek another home,' said this unfeeling woman, to Abby, 'and very soon, too.'

Poor erring, yet unfortunate orphan! Her spirit was crushed beneath the weight of woe she was thus suddenly called to endure. Not only were her affections wounded in the most tender point, by the cruelty of him to whom she had given them in all the ardor of her youthful and affectionate heart, but she was to be cast out upon the wide world without one kind friend to throw the mantle of charity over her faults, and strive, while gently reproving the wanderer from virtue's path, to raise and re-assure her.

The uncle of Abby told his wife, that as she was an orphan, it would be better not to turn the miserable girl out of doors, as she was young and alone in the world.

'I care not for that,' said his hard-hearted wife, 'she shall not stay in my house.'

This indifferent man knew that it would not avail any-

thing with his wife, to plead in behalf of the poor girl, therefore he said no more upon the subject. He did not feel much interest for this lonely one, and was easily persuaded that it was not his duty now to befriend her. His companion labored to convince him, that it would be conniving at sin to protect his niece, under existing circumstances, and he was by her influenced to turn a deaf ear to the entreaties of the friendless girl that she might be allowed to remain in his house.

She was cast out upon the charity and sympathy, it might be, of strangers; while her aunt, with a feeling of self-complacency that ill became her, exulted in the thought that she had, in her treatment of this unhappy daughter of affliction, evinced her disapprobation of the error into which she had fallen. Deluded woman! she belonged to that class, almost everywhere to be found, whose conduct towards the erring is nearly if not quite as reprehensible as is theirs. Well may the blush of shame mantle the cheek of those who like this relative of the poor orphan in effect say to an unfortunate sister, 'Depart from me, for I am holier than thou.'

The heart-broken Abby quitted the house of her relatives, laden with their invectives and reproaches. She knew not where to go, although she had been tauntingly told to apply for admission to the parish poor-house. 'What will become of me,' said she mentally, as she left the house of her uncle, 'if all turn from me with disgust like my relatives, — I cannot live! O, for some friend to whom I could unbosom not only my weakness, but my sorrow, at this hour! — had my mother lived, I should not have been reduced to this state of disgrace and need!'

As such reflections filled her mind, she walked along the road that led to Brookfield, the place of Mr. Dalby's residence. Night drew on; she ventured to stop at a small, though respectable looking house; she knocked at the door with a trembling heart; it was opened by a woman whose pleasant countenance encouraged her to make known to her the fact that she was destitute of a home, and would be greatly obliged for a night's lodging beneath her roof.

This person bade her enter her humble, yet neat dwelling, at the same moment saying, 'I am poor, but you seem to be more needy than I, consequently you are welcome to stop here.' Somewhat encouraged by the kind manner of this stranger, she acquainted her with her trying situation, and asked her if she knew of any one who would be likely to afford her a home for a time. 'I have some money,' continued Abby, 'Yet I am aware that no one will consent to receive me, unless it be to perform an act of kindness towards an afflicted fellow-being.'

The kind hearted woman was affected at the recital her visitor gave of her sorrows, and told her tenderly that she might remain with her for a time, if she chose; but added that her husband would return from abroad in a month or two, and then she could not accommodate her.

The homeless girl was glad of an opportunity to be sheltered for a season, and thankfully accepted the offer of the hospitable matron.

There were several children in the family into which the otherwise friendless girl was admitted, and she soon discovered that the woman who had regarded her with pity, was indeed poor, so far as this world's goods were

concerned, but it was evident that she was rich in faith and abounded in good works. Her heart yearned over this young and interesting, though degraded one, and she strove to enkindle anew in her bosom that love of virtue which the influence of the perfidious Colonel Chambers, over her pliant mind, had impaired.

It was apparent to this discerning woman that the regard Abby entertained for the ungrateful young man, was too strong to admit of her forgetting him very soon, if ever. On some accounts she regretted this fact; but there were reasons that made her glad that it was so, as it convinced her that it was regard for him that had been the cause of the downfall of this imprudent young creature, instead of wilful depravity.

Often were the feelings of the poor unfortunate solaced for a short season by the truly Christian conversation of her hostess; and she dreaded the arrival of the time when she must part with one whom she could not but consider a friend. This dreaded hour came, just before the time that she was first introduced to the notice of the reader.

The husband of her kind hostess, upon his return, disapproved of her prolonged stay in his family; and the lonely child of misfortune felt herself compelled to seek another asylum. It was upon the evening of the day upon which she left the house where Christian kindness had made her welcome during a scene of trial, that she was directed to the hospitable dwelling of Mr. Dalby.

The friend with whom Abby had stopped at the time she was obliged reluctantly to have her leave her humble home, remembered these persons as such as might be expected to befriend the distressed, and encouraged her to

apply to them for aid. The manner in which she was received by them, is already known to the reader.

Who that would not willingly cherish reflections such as Mrs. Dalby was permitted to enjoy, in view of what she endeavored to do for this disheartened Abby? Or who would be willing to possess the feelings of her unkind relatives? and furthermore, who that does not feel indignant at the villany of Colonel Chambers?

It may be true, lamentably so, that some will pass over the wickedness of this man, and lay the whole blame of the dereliction of this orphan to herself. The writer cannot boast any sympathy with such. She was guilty, and for her faults cast out by those to whom she was bound by natural ties, and left to the protection of those to whom she had been before unknown, while this unprincipled man was in many cases smiled upon by — must it, shall it be said — virtuous females!

Let every woman, who exerts an influence, no matter how limited, scrupulously forbear to extend the hand of friendship to the man of impure habits, and it will not be long, ere the evil now so much deprecated, shall cease to exist.

It is in the power of woman, by decision of purpose, to degrade or reform those who look to her to countenance or frown upon their actions; but if she will not reprehend the profligate, no wonder if a state of things continues which will cause a large proportion of mankind to spurn the idea of a pure friendship existing between the different sexes.

Abby was, by the kindness of Mrs. Crosby and her other new friends, sustained from sinking at once into a

state of wretchedness and despair. Her affectionate and confiding heart rested, as it were, in a measure, upon these friends, and she was eased of much of the acuteness of her sorrow. She told them all her heart; and in doing so confessed that what was hardest of all to endure, was the indifference of the father of her child. 'I ought to forget him,' said she; 'I will always try to do so, but I fear he will be the last person to be forgotten by me while life remains.'

'Do you not sometimes feel angry with Colonel Chambers, when you remember his perfidy?' asked Mrs. Crosby, one day, as they were conversing together.

'I do not feel as angry at his conduct,' replied the poor girl, 'as I do grieved. I want to banish him forever from my mind, but it is impossible for me to do this; his image comes unbidden before me as soon as I awake each morning, and lingers there until my senses are again steeped in forgetfulness when I fall asleep at night.'

Mrs. Crosby was aware that the health of Abby declined, ever after she went to her house, and feared that she was destined to swell the number of those weak and deluded girls who fall victims to the vicious and designing, and thus are hastened prematurely to the grave; and she was not mistaken.

This lady felt called upon to do all in her power to alleviate the sufferings of Abby, whom she loved, notwithstanding her knowledge of her past errors; and she did indeed much to smooth her passage to an early grave, by leading her to repose her cares on One above.

Abby loved her child; but as Mr. Dalby had greatly befriended herself and infant also, while her own feeble

health prevented her from doing as she could wish by the unfortunate little innocent, she determined to comply with the wishes of this gentleman, and give the babe away to him. He told her that she should always be allowed to see the child, whenever she desired; but enjoined secrecy upon her, in respect to its belonging to herself.

Mrs. Dalby believed the child was her own; and as she perceived the sad change in the appearance of its youthful mother, when she saw her from time to time, she could but feel thankful that the poor girl would not be obliged to leave a motherless and worse than fatherless babe behind her at death. Abby knew that she was fast hastening to the tomb, and felt more than satisfied that she could leave her little one under the care of those who had evinced such disinterestedness in befriending a lonely, erring one, like herself.

Colonel Chambers was aware that the young creature who had reposed so much confidence in him, had been abandoned by her selfish relatives, and that she had been indebted to the charity of strangers for a home since the day upon which she received that note from him which had been so fatal to her peace; yet he cared not that she suffered for his sake, if he was only saved from being annoyed by her presence, and he was careful to avoid any place where he was fearful of meeting her.

When he heard that she was sick, and was expected soon to die, he manifested no regret. Aware that the child was provided for, he thought himself fortunate, and basked in the sunshine of prosperity, caressed by those whose duty it was to rebuke him as the destroyer of a young, affectionate, confiding female.

Abby, at the early age of eighteen, closed her eyes upon the world in peaceful hope of the forgiveness of Him, who, when upon earth, said to the erring, '*Go and sin no more.*'

Mrs. Dalby saw with delight the developments of loveliness which time made in the little Sarah Anna, as this child of peculiar fortune was named, and although she remarked, as the little one increased in years, that it did not bear any resemblance to her family, she did not even suspect it was not her own, or that her own babe had died, for many years after these occurrences.

CHAPTER XVII.

Sarah Anna and Mary at School — Sarah Anna deceived in Respect to her Parentage — Irritability of Mary — Secret divulged — Mrs. Dalby's surprise — Friendship between the two Sisters.

Sarah Anna loved both her foster-parents ardently, yet was peculiarly attached to her mother. There was no being on earth who in the opinion of this lovely girl could compare with her, and she derived more pleasure in being in her society, than was afforded her by mingling in that of her youthful companions.

Time glided away, and she became a young lady. She attended school with the eldest daughter of Colonel Chambers, whose name was Mary. Sarah Anna was acknowledged, by all who knew these young ladies, superior to her haughty sister in every respect. Mary was proud and overbearing, and valued herself upon her parentage, wit, and beauty, and regarded Sarah Anna with feelings of jealousy and envy, being conscious that she was destitute of those qualities which she every day saw admired in this sweet girl.

Mary had heard conversation at home, in regard to the unfortunate mother of Sarah Anna. She had thus learned the fact that her infant daughter, when very young, was adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Dalby; still, she was ignorant

of the humiliating truth, that this adopted child was the daughter of her father, and that she, herself, who was only a few days younger than Sarah Anna, was in every respect, save one, born under circumstances as mortifying as those under which her less seemingly fortunate sister had been ushered into existence.

Mary was not a disowned child; her grandparents had not acted an unnatural part towards her mother, whose faults were as great, if not greater than those of the friendless Abby; this was all the difference between the two.

Sarah Anna, at the age of fifteen, was a stranger to her interesting history. She was happy, supposing herself the daughter of intelligent, pious, and wealthy parents, by whom she was taught to value aright these blessings. She was also instructed to be useful in the sphere in which she was allotted to move. Her disposition was amiable; and she had always been treated with the utmost tenderness, by those whom she regarded as her own dear parents.

One day, when she was at school, Mary Chambers, being very irritable and perverse, was reproved by her teacher for her misconduct towards Sarah Anna, whom she treated with great rudeness. The reproof only made her more angry, and she gave vent to her wicked feelings in saying many unkind things to this innocent girl. Sarah Anna was conciliating in her disposition, and strove to soften the angry feelings of Mary towards her, by addressing her kindly. She approached her with a smile, at the same time saying,—'Don't be angry with me

Mary, I am sure I am ready to do anything in my power to serve you, at any time.'

'I wish you would get away from me,' said Mary, petulantly, 'if I cannot have better company than you are, I will not have any.'

'Why,' said one of the school-girls, who was standing near them at the time, 'where will you get better company than Sarah Anna Dalby?'

'Sarah Anna *Dalby*, indeed!' repeated Mary, in a disdainful tone; 'her name is not Dalby, nor never will be, for she is no other than the child of poor Abby Olmsted, and she never had any father!'

'What do you mean, Mary?' asked the young lady she had been addressing.

'Just what I have told you,' replied she; 'it is the truth, and it cannot be denied.'

'The truth! said Sarah Anna, 'it is impossible; you have only said this to provoke me.'

'I say it is true,' answered she, 'for I heard my father say to my mother, one day, that the daughter of Abby Olmsted was one of the fortunate kind, for she was treated like an own child by Mr. Dalby and his companion.'

Sarah Anna went home soon after this conversation, with an overflowing heart. As soon as she saw her mother, she related what Mary had stated about her, and then said,—'Do tell me, mother, if this is true?'

'True!' replied Mrs. Dalby, 'I never have heard anything of the kind intimated by any one, and I presume it was only said to irritate you, by this foolish girl. Think no more about it,' continued the mother, 'it is not worth remembering.'

The impression, however, which had been made upon the mind of the young lady, was too deep to be easily effaced. She often mentioned the remark made so rudely by Mary, and expressed an opinion one day in the presence of an old lady who was visiting Mrs. Dalby, that it was strange that any one should think of speaking as Mary did, if there was no foundation at all for the assertion.

'Why, child,' said this old lady, without reflection, 'it is true that you are not the daughter of Mrs. Dalby.'

'Are you certain of that?' asked that lady, who heard what her visitor had said.

'Certain? yes, indeed, I am,' replied the old lady, apparently unconscious of the effect produced, by what she had affirmed, upon the minds of Mrs. Dalby and her adopted child.

'Then,' said she, 'my child died, I presume?'

'Yes,' responded the other; 'and the infant of Abby was dressed in the clothes belonging to your babe, and carried to you.'

The breast of Mrs. Dalby was now agitated by a variety of emotions, and she wept silently for some time. Sarah Anna, too, wept bitterly at the mortification she felt in knowing that she was in reality a child disowned by her natural father, while she was fearful a knowledge of the fact that deception had been practised, would affect the feelings of her foster-mother towards herself.

The feelings of this good woman were the reverse toward this dear girl from what she feared. It seemed, as Mrs. Dalby said, that this development was the means of binding Sarah Anna to her heart by a stronger tie than

the one by which she had hitherto been endeared to her. She regretted that she had been kept in ignorance of the death of her babe, not so much on her account, as because she was apprehensive that Sarah would be made unhappy by learning her history, which was, in some respects, most unfortunate, at so late a period.

Even Mr. Dalby, when he was apprised of the abrupt manner in which the poor girl had been told of the circumstances connected with her parentage, regretted the course pursued by him in her infancy.

Mrs. Dalby told her husband, that although she appreciated his motives, she could not approve his conduct, in concealing the truth from her in regard to the children. 'Had I known,' continued she, 'that I was left childless, and at the same time that a little helpless stranger, such as Sarah Anna then was, had been directed by Providence to my house, I think my feelings would have led me to do my duty to the dependent little one just as you have made me. It would have been decidedly better, too, to have had Sarah Anna acquainted with the interesting story of her life, as soon as she could understand it. She would thus have been spared the pain she has now endured, as I should have been enabled to fortify her mind so that it would not be affected by the unfeeling taunts of the vulgar and hard-hearted. Be assured it is a mistake to resort to stratagem, in endeavouring to do good. You will always have occasion, as in this instance, to regret doing anything that savors of duplicity.'

Mrs. Dalby enfolded Sarah Anna in her arms, with a feeling of greater fondness than she had ever done before, saying to her at the same moment, 'you are my dear

daughter, in the best sense of the term, and shall ever remain so. If you are' proceeded this lady, 'the daughter of Abby Olmsted, you are also the daughter of the father of Mary. She cannot boast more in point of birthright than you.'

'Are you confident, mother, that this is true?' inquired the girl.

'Yes, my dear, I have always known that the child of your mother belonged to Colonel Chambers,' replied she, 'but have, until recently, supposed it dead.'

'I should like to tell Mary this fact,' said Sarah Anna.

'Not tauntingly I hope,' rejoined the mother.

She looked somewhat confused as her mother made this remark, and answered, 'Not exactly in that way; but would it not be just to have her feelings hurt as much as she hurt mine?'

'It would, perhaps,' said her mother, 'but it is not your prerogative to administer justice in such a case. I can imagine your feelings, and do not wonder that you feel tempted to retaliate, yet you must resist such feelings. "Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good," is a divine precept which ought to be obeyed.'

'I know it, mother,' responded the daughter, 'yet she was provoking, you know.'

'Yes, I do know she was,' said the other; 'and that is the greatest reason why you should not imitate her example. Remember, Mary is your sister; if you are not acknowledged, it is nevertheless your duty to cultivate an affection for her. It is right you should inform her that she has been the means of your knowing this mortifying

truth, which, but for her unkind remarks, might not have been known any further than it had been heretofore.'

'Now,' continued the kind woman, 'I advise you, Sarah Anna, to tell Mary, affectionately, what you have of late learned of your history, and treat her evermore as a sister. You are in as respectable a situation as she is; you have as many friends, and may rightly feel yourself her equal; treat her as such, but never for a moment feel abashed at the recollection of your origin; you have no cause to do so. You cannot be blamed for the faults of others, and will not be reproached for them by any but those who are not worth regarding.'

'Be careful,' further remarked the foster-mother, 'to avoid the errors into which your parents have fallen. Your mother was, I trust, forgiven by her Father in Heaven, ere she left this world. She abhorred her sins, and deeply repented of them, while she wished to admonish all young ladies to take warning from the affecting tale of her life, and avoid her errors. Love to do right, and you will be safe.'

Sarah Anna felt soothed and encouraged, by the conversation of her more than mother, to pursue a course of high-minded and virtuous action in regard to her newly-discovered sister, and she resolved not to be tempted by her unkindness to act an unfriendly part towards her.

It was not long ere she had an opportunity to see Mary alone, when, putting her arm affectionately around her waist, she said to her, 'Mary, you and I are related to each other, and we ought to be good friends, I am sure.'

'How are we related?' asked Mary.

'Your father is also mine,' said Sarah Anna. 'You told the truth the other day when you affirmed that Abby Olmsted was my mother; she was left by your father, Mary, at the time of your parents' marriage. We can sympathize with each other, in some respects, at least, and we must be friends.'

Mary was astonished at the calm manner of Sarah, though she was not surprised at the statement she had made concerning herself, for hints had been thrown out in her presence by those who knew of her unkindness to Sarah Anna, that made her acquainted with these facts, which could not be denied by her parents. Mary, therefore, readily acceded to the generous proposal of her sister to be friendly to her. She was mortified at the reflection of her past despicable conduct in regard to the noble-spirited girl, and it is believed she profited by the great mistake she had made at that time.

Ever after this event, so trifling in itself, these two young ladies continued to reciprocate each other's kindness. Mary was greatly indebted to her sister for many kind hints, by which she profited; and as they advanced in life, they ceased not to cultivate feelings of good-will towards each other.

The foster-mother of Sarah Anna rejoiced in view of the course pursued by her daughter, and was happy that it had been in her power to render her the assistance she had so cheerfully imparted to her, while at the same time she had been solaced by the engaging society of this lovely girl.

Years passed on, and these sisters dwelt in the same town; and both became heads of families. Sarah was

greatly respected; and was indeed the means of elevating her less naturally refined sister.

When Mr. Dalby and his companion died, they were comforted in respect to the influence which their daughter exerted in the community in which she lived; and considered themselves more than repaid for all their kindness to the lonely wanderer, whose case they compassionated, and who, perhaps through their instrumentality, had been rescued from the path of sin in which she might otherwise have been destroyed.

Sarah Anna, Mrs. Nelson, Mrs. Coleman, and Mrs. Howe, were associated in early life, and sympathized in each other's plans, joys, and sorrows. In riper years they still cultivated a friendship that lasted until death.

Sarah Anna survived these relatives, who were all her seniors in years. It was her duty to help administer to the last wants of the wretched Mr. Oliver; to assist in forming the character of the ill-fated Simon; also to strive to comfort his afflicted mother, and wipe the tear of sorrow from her eyes as she approached the end of her earthly pilgrimage.

The youngest children of Mrs. Nelson were objects of peculiar interest to her. The daughter of Mr. Johnson, who was the youngest of the family, it will be remembered, was deserted by her father in early infancy. That father, it will be recollected, was an inebriate, and the last the reader knew of him, he was in a distant city, free from all restraint, indulging in his sinful habits.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Desire of Susan to see her long-absent Father — His unexpected return after thirty years' absence — Mr. Johnson's excuse for his absence — Susan happily disappointed in his appearance — His second wife and child in a distant city — Their trials on his account.

The curiosity of Susan, the daughter of Mr. Johnson, to see her father, increased with her years. She had not been taught to love his memory, yet there was something endearing to her heart in the name of father, and she longed to behold his face.

Year after year glided away, and still no tidings of the wanderer ever reached his home. Susan, at one time, indirectly heard that he resided in a place situated on the western bank of the Hudson; and thither she immediately directed a letter, but received no answer. Still, she would not despair of seeing or hearing from him, until after the lapse of many years, during which she had attained to womanhood. She now thought less of him, and began to feel that he might be dead.

At this juncture, a friend called one day at the house where she lived in Braintree, and addressing Susan, said, 'Who do you think called to see me this morning?'

'I don't know,' replied she, 'I am sure.'

'Try to conjecture,' said the gentleman, 'as it was some one who feels greatly interested in your welfare.'

'In *my* welfare! who can it be?'

'Whom would you like it should be?' asked her friend.

'I should be pleased to have it be some dear absent relative, say my father, if he lives!'

'Well,' said the other, 'what if I should say, it was he whom I saw this morning?'

'I should rejoice if you could say so truthfully.'

'I can say so, and affirm what is true;' answered the gentleman.

'O, I am thankful!' replied Susan; 'but where is he? why did you not bring him with you?'

'Because I feared the surprise would be too great for you, and thought I had better inform you first of his arrival.'

Her friend then left Susan, and went out to meet her father. He soon returned, followed by a gentlemanly looking man whom he introduced to Susan as the individual she had so long desired to behold. She extended her hand towards him, at the same time saying with emotion, 'Can it be that I see my own dear father.'

'It is true;' replied her father, and cordially proffered his hand; 'I am your father, though you have known so little of me.'

'I am glad to see you, even at this late period,' said the daughter, 'for I feared I should never behold you in this life!'

Susan was happily disappointed, by the dignified appearance of her long absent parent, and her gladness was

increased on finding him a temperate man. She had been told that he was a loathsome drunkard; but now she was confident that she was not deceived, and that she saw him before her, free from any marks of dissipation.

There was one reflection which marred the happiness of the hour Susan had so long desired to behold, and that was the indifference manifested by this parent for her welfare, during the thirty long years of his absence from her.

Had he but said that he had done wrong, and regretted his neglect of a father's duty, it would have removed every unpleasant feeling from her mind. As it was, she felt that his return was only to gratify curiosity, and not because he felt interested for her.

She ventured to express her feelings on this subject to her father, who said that his affection for her had ever been great, while he excused his past conduct on the ground that he had not resolution to return and endure the reproaches he well knew would be heaped upon him by her mother and others.

He stated that he had always kept himself informed of the situation of the family he had left at home, and had thought it best to stay away, lest his presence should be unwelcome.

He had formed a connection abroad, and had left a family in the city which he now considered his home; and Susan rejoiced in the thought that he was not an unnatural father to those relatives she had never seen.

Her friends ridiculed the idea of his professed regard for his child, whom he had for so many years left to the

care of others. Susan could not blame them for so doing, but she grieved that her parent had such perverted views of right, as to think it less degrading to endeavor to palliate a wrong action than frankly to acknowledge it.

Had he magnanimously confessed his faults, and his determination to be governed by better motives in future, Susan would have felt that he elevated himself at once, as he really would, in the opinion of every generous individual. His views upon this subject were false, and he dreaded acknowledging that he was wrong, lest it should be considered too humiliating by the world.

It is not known whether he continued to entertain these feelings to the close of life, or whether he adopted nobler sentiments. Susan never saw him after he visited her on this memorable occasion. She heard that he returned to his family, and went down to the grave, in peace with himself and all mankind. The remainder is veiled from the view of mortals, and idle speculation may not presume to lift the covering from the invisible future.

The reader will doubtless feel interested to know something of the history of the second family of Mr. Johnson. The lady with whom he became connected, after his unfortunate union with the mother of Susan was dissolved, was unlike his former companion in almost every respect. She, too, like her, willingly believed him faultless, and dreamed not that so pleasing an exterior as he could boast, could conceal pitiable defects of moral character.

The parentage of this lady was highly respectable, and her education and talents placed her in an enviable rank in society. Her personal appearance, too, was attractive. She was tall and graceful, and her mild, interesting cou-

tenance beamed with vivacity and intelligence. Her disposition was ingenuous and amiable. Nature, to human view, had endowed her with those qualities requisite for the wife of such a person as Mr. Johnson.

With pain she discovered his weaknesses, yet forbore to chide him for his faults; but by her persuasive mildness, often caused him to acknowledge that

'Kindness has resistless charms.'

She endeavored, as far as practicable, to conceal the faults of her erring husband, even from her nearest friends. Would that it might truthfully be said that he was grateful for her efforts to do him good, and abstained entirely from the evil practice she so much deprecated; but it was otherwise.

One son and a daughter were the only children of these parents, which lived any considerable time. The son was the eldest. His birth was an event which its mother hoped would be the means of entirely reclaiming his misguided father from the path of folly. The father doted upon his son with peculiar fondness. Ever after the birth of this little one, he spent every leisure moment with the infant and its mother. The wine cup was abandoned, and Mrs. Johnson considered herself a happy wife and mother. A year or two passed on, during which period her happiness was uninterrupted. Just two years from the birth of little George, as the son was called, a little daughter was added to the family, whom they named Frances.

Not long after this event, Mrs. Johnson accidentally be-

came acquainted with the circumstances under which Mr. Johnson left his home ere she saw him. Until this time, she had been a stranger to the fact that he was either a wedded man or a father, previous to his marriage with herself; and it would have been her wish still to have remained ignorant of his past foibles. As it was, she resolved to bury them in her own bosom, as she could easily overlook his failings.

Time passed away pleasantly with Mrs. Johnson, until little George attained his fourth year. She had been spared the grief and mortification, during that time, of knowing that her husband had been entirely overcome by indulging his former sinful practice. As long as thta was the case, she considered herself favored, though not exempt from those trials which are alike the lot of all.

At this time, their darling son was attacked with alarming illness. The event, in itself, was painful to the feelings of the fond mother; and her distress was greatly augmented by the want of fortitude evinced by her companion on this trying occasion. She strove to cheer him and help to sustain his spirit, by every effort in her power; still, she was compelled to acknowledge the fact, that no power less than omnipotent could support the mind of her deeply afflicted husband.

As the child sank, from day to day, beneath the prostrating effect of acute disease, which his anxious parents were told, by the medical attendants, must unavoidably prove fatal, Mrs. Johnson longed for the sustaining sympathy of her husband. She valued that of other friends; but his sympathy was to her more valuable than that of

all the world besides. She was one of those who could say, from heart-felt experience,

Sympathy, dear boon of Heaven,
  Granted mortals here below!
Loveliest, sweetest gem that 's given,
  To assuage our ev'ry woe.

Earth may boast no lasting pleasure;
  Still, there's joy unmingled here,
Gently flowing without measure,
  From soft pity's gentle tear!

When the brow with care is shaded,
  And our transient comforts fly,
When the breast by grief's invaded,
  Sweet is sympathy's soft sigh!

Poor Mrs. Johnson! her heart was made to bleed anew, in this hour of affliction, as she saw her husband turn from the couch on which lay their dying child, to drown his sorrows in the inebriating cup, which she had flattered herself he had abandoned forever. All fortitude forsook the unfortunate man, as he saw the eyes of his lovely George about to be closed forever in death. He was overwhelmed, and imagined that his spirit could not be sustained, and yielded again to the temptation of the indulgence of that weakness, by which he had been so often enslaved.

After the death of George, a more than midnight gloom pervaded the dwelling of this sorrowing mother; for, while the precious remains of her much-loved boy lay clad in the habiliments of death, beneath the same roof lay his father, in an apartment remote from his child, stupified with

stimulating drink. The heart-stricken wife and mother mourned more deeply, in view of this one great fault of her husband, than she did at the bereavement she had been called to endure. Her sensitive mind was lacerated with the thought, that spite of every means which her inventive fancy suggested, to hide the failings of her companion, whom she loved but too well, his disgrace could not be entirely concealed from the large circle of acquaintance and friends, who came to offer consolation to this afflicted family.

Mrs. Johnson was obliged to endure the mortification of apologizing for the inability of her husband to be present at the funeral of their son. She pleaded his indisposition as an excuse for not leaving his room, while, at the same time, she blushed to reflect upon the cause. Day after day passed, during which this misguided man contrived to procure either strong drink or a substitute, of which he partook so freely as to render him incapable of attending to his business. His companion was almost disheartened; though she constantly strove to arouse him from his state of degradation, and to awaken anew in his breast the sense of self-respect which he seemed to have lost.

One morning, soon after he awoke, he appeared perfectly conscious of his miserable situation, and wept at the recollection of the past. His anxious wife improved this opportunity to lead his thoughts from himself, and endeavored to impress upon his mind a sense of his obligations again to resolve to rise above the debasing weakness into which he had fallen. In reply to her kind entreaties, he exclaimed—'Oh, it is no use for me thus to resolve—I have not firmness to execute such a purpose!'

Encouraged by this answer, Mrs. Johnson affectionately responded, 'You have more firmness, my dear husband, than you imagine; be determined once more to act like a man, not only for your own sake, but for mine, and that of our own dear little Frances.'

'Would that I could,' said he, mournfully; 'but my business has been neglected, and I have lost the confidence of my friends, which I fear I shall never regain.'

'Do not indulge such thoughts,' replied his wife; 'remember, you have still every thing to incite you to virtuous action. If you have done wrong, stop not to think of it too long, but determine at once to forsake the wrong and pursue a more elevated course.'

Mr. Johnson struggled many days, with a sense of shame on the one hand and duty on the other, until at last he yielded to the belief that he could never again be respected, and secretly left his home, and travelled to a place about one hundred miles from the city where was left his disconsolate wife, to bear alone the accumulated weight of sorrow which his sinful conduct had brought upon her. Weeks passed, and no tidings came from the fugitive father of her child. She settled his business as well as she could, and was obliged to admit the unpleasant truth, that she suffered pecuniarily, besides enduring the disgrace which she was called upon to bear.

After the lapse of a few months, Mrs. Johnson received a letter from her husband, in which he informed her of all he had experienced since he left home. With great interest she perused this communication; for, with all his failings, she was still si cerely attached to her com-

panion. When she read the confession of his faults, which was made with great seeming humility, and accompanied with earnest entreatics for forgiveness, she wept, and longed to assure him of her returning confidence and abiding affection.

Mr. Johnson stated in his letter, that he was settled in business, and was determined to do well; and that he should be glad if she would forgive him, and remove to the place where he was then residing. She rejoiced at the reception of these tidings, and resolved to comply with his wishes as soon as practicable. When she expressed this determination to her friends, they remonstrated, assuring her that she would be pursuing an unwise course.

'I think otherwise,' replied Mrs. Johnson. 'I believe I can be the means of doing good to my unfortunate, mistaken husband; at least, I shall try.'

She wrote immediately to Mr. Johnson, and acquainted him of her decision; at the same time naming the day on which he might expect her. She then hastily prepared for her removal; and in a few days was again with the father of her remaining child. She felt encouraged to hope that brighter days awaited her, when she saw the improvement in her husband's appearance and spirits; and not any thing was wanting on her part to induce him to do right.

For a number of months, his reformation promised fair to be permanent, and a source of happiness to his confiding wife. But, in less than one year, the fatal tempter came, and he was again ensnared by his delusive wiles. He allowed himself to mingle in society where the convivial cup was gaily passed around. He refused the first

invitation to partake of its contents, but being strongly urged, he foolishly thought it would evince a want of courtesy to decline further, and hesitatingly tasted again that draught which had so often proved baneful to his own happiness and that of his friends. Ere he had drank one glass, a relish was excited for the unnatural stimulant, which he again indulged; and before the party separated for the night, he was carried to his patient, uncomplaining wife, in a state of intoxication. Her heart well nigh sickened, as she saw him, almost helpless, borne to his chamber; but she spoke not, for she felt that words on such an occasion would be idle. She left him, with his faculties benumbed, lying upon his bed, and retired to another apartment, where her innocent and unconscious little daughter lay sleeping. Mrs. Johnson threw herself upon the bed beside her child; but vainly was sleep courted by her during that wearisome night.

She dreaded the dawn of day, for she shrunk from the developments it would make respecting her companion. When the morrow came, to her it was shrouded with gloom.

Ere the sun rose, her husband awoke, and crept stealthily from his dwelling, with a feeling of shame that caused him to shun the eye of any one whom he felt would disapprove of his conduct. He bent his steps towards a public house, where liquor was sold by the glass; but ventured not to raise his eyes until he found himself seated in the bar-room. Here he felt that he was welcome and could act without restraint. A sad practical comment, this, upon the keeper of such an establishment!

'Well, my friend,' said the proprietor, 'what will you take this morning?'

'A glass of your best brandy, sir,' answered the unhappy man, 'as I am suffering from a feeling of faintness this morning.'

The brandy was handed him; as he was about putting it to his lips, he looked towards an open window, and his eyes instantly met the gaze of a gentleman who had proved himself to him a well-tried friend on many occasions. This individual was aware of the situation in which Mr. Johnson had been carried home on the previous night, and had seen him leave his home on that morning, with an expression of countenance that led him to fear that he would repeat the excesses of the preceding night. He had followed him, unperceived by the object of his solicitude, until he saw him in the way described.

Mr. Johnson was quick to perceive an expression of regret depicted on the countenance of this friend, whom he had long regarded with a feeling of affection and deference, as he beckoned to him to come out into the street. A momentary conflict passed in the mind of the guilty one. His appetite greatly desired the intoxicating draught, yet a feeling of laudable pride triumphed over the temptation. He sat down the glass, with its contents untasted, and laying the usual price of the liquor beside it, hastily walked out of the house towards the gentleman who stood waiting for him.

This friend, who seemed to possess something of the wisdom of a serpent, blended with the harmlessness of a dove, did not appear to notice the mortifying position in which Mr. Johnson was placed, but walking quickly

towards him, he passed down the steps leading from the hotel, proffered his hand with a feeling of cordiality which was cheering to the spirit of the self-condemned man.

'I am glad to find you thus early;' said Mr. Sumner, the friendly gentleman. 'You are the very person I wished to meet this morning.'

'Have you any particular business with me?' inquired the other.

Mr. Sumner was prepared to respond to such a question, for he had that very morning contrived a plan, which he hoped would divert the thoughts of Mr. Johnson from the exhilarating cup.

'I have particular business with you;' replied this anxious and kind friend, at the same time turning towards the home of the other, and asking him to walk with him. 'I wish you to make one of a social party, which is expected to leave this place to-day for the purpose of going on an excursion of pleasure, and I hope of profit, a few miles into the country.'

'I do not feel like seeing company at all to-day,' said Mr. Johnson, 'therefore I must decline accepting your kind invitation, at the same time thanking you for the friendly notice you have taken of me.'

'Do not try to excuse yourself from becoming one of this party,' answered Mr. Sumner. 'I shall not consent,' continued he, playfully, 'to allow your feelings to prevent you from going with us, for we cannot get along without you. You are suffering, somewhat, physically, I know, but I believe the contemplated excursion will greatly benefit you.'

'I think you must excuse me to-day,' rejoined Mr. Johnson.

'No, no,' said his friend, 'you cannot be excused. I shall feel greatly disappointed if you do not go with us.'

As they drew near the dwelling of Mr. Johnson, he told Mr. Sumner he would be obliged to stop in the neighbourhood on an errand.

'Cannot you postpone this call until another time?' inquired his friend; 'I assure you, if you would do so, it would be very gratifying to me.'

Mr. Johnson labored hard to offer reasons for stopping at this time, but his friend, who dreaded the consequences of his doing so, as he would thus lose sight of him, was so importunate that he should return directly home and prepare for their excursion, that he could no longer refuse, without being absolutely rude and wounding the feelings of Mr. Sumner; therefore the unhappy man concluded to comply with the wishes of his friend. They both walked directly to the residence of Mr. Johnson, where the guilty husband was met by his wife in a manner that would lead him to suppose that the affair of the preceding night had been quite forgotten.

Mr. Sumner made known his intentions to Mrs. Johnson, and was very urgent that herself and companion should join the little party. This judicious lady gladly accepted the invitation to accompany her husband, and expressed so much anxiety to go, that he was constrained to go with her. The friendly gentleman then hastily engaged a few of their acquaintances to join them, and very soon the company were on their way to a most delightful spot, which they had chosen as their rural resort. Mr. Johnson was melancholy for a while, but ere many hours had passed, he became interested in the cheerful society by which he was sur-

rounded, and in the many pleasant objects which met his admiring view. He began to appear like himself; and seemed to get rid of the idea that it was necessary, after having fallen into temptation, to pursue a course of wrong doing for a certain length of time, ere he could return to the right path.

On the third day after leaving home, this cheerful company returned to their dwellings, and he for whose sake the excursion had been planned, was one of the liveliest of the number. He felt truly grateful for the interest his friend, Mr. Sumner, manifested, and purposed to evince his kind remembrance of his regard, by striving in future to avoid temptation. This he did for nearly two years; and exerted his influence on the side of temperance. Being possessed of genius, he employed his talents in endeavoring to benefit those who had erred like himself.

After this, he again yielded to temptation, and again brought disgrace and sorrow upon his wife and interesting daughter. He passed the remainder of his life in the same manner as he spent that part of it which has been described; and it is a matter of doubt, whether the daughter he deserted in infancy suffered more from his unnatural absence, than did the one who was so often mortified by witnessing her father's derelictions from virtue. It is hard to decide which of these daughters is most entitled to sympathy. It is true, however, that both Susan and Frances were objects of peculiar interest to most who knew them, and there was much in the history of each to call forth the pity of every feeling heart.

The reader will expect to know more about them, and will realize this expectation in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIX.

Two sisters, Susan and Frances, unknown to each other — Their father's mortification — Disgraceful conduct — Sickness of Mrs. Johnson — Frances — Susan.

NEVER were were two sisters more unlike each other, than were Susan and Frances. Susan bore a strong resemblance to her father, both in countenance and disposition, while Frances was almost an exact likeness of her mother. Both were called handsome.

Susan was of middle stature. Her form slender, yet well-proportioned; her hair and eyes rather dark; and her countenance expressive of intelligence and good sense. Her sister was tall and graceful; her hair and complexion light; and her eyes, though mild, were expressive of sprightliness and good humor. Her disposition was very amiable. Her father ever spoke of her with feelings of exultation, and often boasted of her loveliness.

The influence exerted over the mind of one of these sisters, was very unlike that which was felt by the other. The first time Susan ever heard the name of her father mentioned, it was done in such a manner, that with the remembrance of it a feeling of contempt was ever afterwards associated. She longed to enjoy the blessing of a father's care and protection; but there were very few to

whom she ever unbosomed her feelings, or spoke of him who had regarded her with such cruel indifference.

Sometimes she was rudely questioned concerning her father, which was a source of great pain to her sensitive mind. On such occasions, she always strove to make evasive replies, and change the subject of conversation, as soon as common courtesy would admit; often wondering that there were those possessed of so little sensibility as carelessly to wound the feelings of others, by inquisitively prying into circumstances which are distressing to another to dwell upon.

Susan heard indirectly that she had a brother and sister younger than herself. She heard, too, of the death of her brother, but was told that her sister still lived, and she longed to behold her. In imagination she often visited this unseen relative, and wished very much to know with what feelings she regarded her father.

Frances, at an early age, was informed by her mother that she had a sister dwelling in a distant place, whom probably she would never behold. She was told, too, that the mother of this sister had once been the companion of her father, and that a separation took place between them because the lady had not patience to endure the faults of her husband. Frances greatly desired to become acquainted with her far-distant sister. 'O, it cannot be,' she would say, 'that we sisters were born to live and die without once beholding each other. She often inquired of her father respecting Susan, and on one occasion innocently asked him if he loved her. Being answered in the affirmative, she said, 'then how can you bear to live so many years without seeing her?'

Confused at the question, he endeavored to reply evasively. But Frances was not satisfied, and continued her interrogations until he told her he did not wish to hear any more upon the subject. She said no more at that time. It was not long ere she again renewed the conversation; for it was a topic which occupied her thoughts much every day.

Mr. Johnson did not wish to converse upon the subject, for it caused him pain; and he wished his daughter had never been made acquainted with the fact that he had deserted an innocent and helpless child. He told his daughter if she would talk no more about it, he would endeavor to visit Susan, as soon as he possibly could, and then he would acquaint her with every fact he could learn in regard to her.

This assurance was a comfort to Frances, and she ceased to importune her father respecting her unseen sister. Events, too, occurred at home which occupied each waking moment of the unfortunate girl. The health of Mrs. Johnson, which was never firm, had suffered greatly on account of the anxiety she had been called to endure in consequence of the conduct of her husband. About the time Frances attained her sixteenth year, her mother was prostrated on a bed of dangerous illness, to which she was confined for several weeks. Mr. Johnson was far from being habitually unkind to his family, and he would cheerfully make any personal sacrifice for the comfort of his suffering companion, so long as he was enabled to bear up under the trial of her sickness. But he was one of those who are greatly agitated whenever alarming disease invades their dwelling. His rest at night was necessarily

disturbed, and his anxiety on account of his wife, deprived him of any relish for food. Under these circumstances he very readily yielded to temptation, and partook of some brandy, which had been brought into the house for Mrs. Johnson. Having once tasted, he, as on former occasions, continued to drink deeper and deeper of the ruinous cup, until he was ashamed to appear in the presence of his family, and deserted his home, at the very hour when he was most needed.

Poor Frances felt that her cup of sorrow was more than full, ere her father thus abruptly left her, even while she was pleading with him to stay for the sake of her dear afflicted mother. After he was gone, she wrung her hands with a feeling of agony. The source of her sorrows was of such a nature that she felt but few could sympathize with her; and her heart revolted at the idea of being obliged to hear those vulgar expressions which the many are wont to utter on such an occasion.

She concealed the fact that her father had gone from her mother, as long as possible; and when she could no longer do so, palliated the case as much as she could, and carefully kept her ignorant of the truth that he had taken with him nearly all the money they had. This unkind act the distressed girl determined should remain a secret in her own bosom. If her mother knew they were thus left almost penniless, Frances was aware that her troubles would be augmented, and a feeling of pride also made her anxious that others should never know the extent of their pecuniary embarrassment.

'No;' reflected this affectionate daughter, 'it will be of no avail to inform others of our difficulties; that could only double the trial. It is bad enough to know that peo-

ple have a general idea that we are perplexed, without understanding our situation in detail.'

At this time, cold weather was fast approaching, for which this family were poorly prepared. The almost constant demand upon the little money left them, very soon reduced the amount remaining to a few shillings. Frances' mother became increasingly sick, for some time after Mr. Johnson deserted them; and the anxious girl found but little leisure from the important and constantly pressing duty of attending at her bed-side. The first opportunity offered her to leave her mother in the care of a friend, she embraced, and started, as she had many days purposed, to go to the house of an individual whom she had reason to believe would gladly furnish her with some needle-work, for which she trusted a liberal compensation might be afforded her.

As she passed along the street on this laudable errand, the chilling wind of Autumn pierced her keenly, and as her feet were but slightly protected from the cold, damp ground, she felt far from being comfortable. Glad would she have been if duty had not called upon her, as she believed it did, to make this effort. As she was situated, no obstacle seemed too great to be surmounted by this affectionate girl, if she might be the means of preventing an accumulation of her mother's woes. She thought of only the object of her pursuit, until she arrived at the place whither her steps had been directed.

She was fortunate enough to find the individual she sought at home, and immediately made known her business in a respectful and unassuming manner. The lady to whom she applied was interested in her pale yet beautiful countenance;

and was confident, from her lovely appearance, that she was unlike the ordinary applicants for employment. After making the usual inquiries respecting the qualifications of the young lady to execute the work for which she had applied, she asked her name. She gave the desired information with a feeling of timidity and reluctance, for it was the first time in her life, notwithstanding all the misfortunes of the family, that their finances had ever been in so low a state as to require either her mother or herself to depend upon the efforts of their own hands for the means of support.

A lady present on the occasion, looked up in surprise as she heard the name of Frances Johnson pronounced by the embarrassed girl, who also gave the name and number of the street where she resided. This person had been made familiar with the history of Mr. Johnson, whom she had often seen, though unacquainted with him. She, too, had seen his wife, and heard much of his amiable and accomplished daughter. Her astonishment at seeing the young lady in her present situation was very great, and she abruptly inquired if Frances was the daughter of James Johnson.

'I am,' replied the poor girl, while a slight blush tinged her countenance.

'Then,' said the other, in rather a significant tone, 'you must be a very industrious young lady, if you wish work for yourself; for, if I have been rightly informed, there is no necessity of your doing anything of the kind.'

'My father,' answered Frances, mildly, 'has always been enabled to procure a good salary, but there are reasons why I wish to do something for myself;' then turning to the other lady, inquired if she could comply with her re-

quest. The lady very readily handed her some work, at the same time naming the amount she might expect to receive for her labor. Frances gladly took the little bundle offered her, and respectfully bidding the ladies good morning, hastened home.

Besides devoting all the time necessary to the comfort of her mother, she contrived on that very day to commence the task she had engaged to perform; and made, unknown to any one, considerable progress towards its completion; and when, late at night, she entrusted her mother to the care of another, and retired to rest, she was consoled by the reflection that though over-wearied by the efforts she had made, she was pursuing an honorable course in thus endeavoring to save her beloved parent the pain of being obliged to solicit aid from friends who blamed her for befriending her unfortunate, guilty husband.

The question may arise in the mind of some reader, why had not Mrs. Johnson contrived to lay aside something, from the salary of her husband, with which to make herself comfortable, in an emergency like the one described. Aware that such an individual has never closely observed the management of one of that class of persons to whom Mr. Johnson belonged, it may be necessary to state that, notwithstanding his income was handsome, his unbounded extravagance, during his oft-recurring seasons of dissipation, prevented their funds from increasing very rapidly. Sometimes, in the course of one month, he would expend several hundred dollars, without at all benefitting his family in doing so. He was scrupulously honest, when sober, to discharge whatever debts he had previously con-

tracted. This fact accounts for the depressed state of their pecuniary affairs, after he had taken with him little less than a hundred dollars, at the time of his wicked and abrupt departure from home.

Mrs. Johnson's education and lady-like deportment had always rendered her a favorite among her friends. They would have considered her faultless, had she done as they desired, and separated her destiny from that of her dissipated husband. But this she would not do; and proudly resolved to conceal all her trials from her relatives, as far as practicable. Frances had well understood her mother's feelings on this point, and was influenced by what she knew would be her wishes, at this time, in striving to support herself and mother until she might hear from her father. In a day or two she finished the garment she had taken home to make, and on returning it to her employer had the satisfaction of being applauded for the neatness with which it was made; and being as she felt, over-paid for her labor, returned home with a cheerful heart, taking more work of the same kind.

In this manner did this lovely girl provide for the wants of her mother, who, after many weeks, began slowly to recover from this trying illness. Hope again brightened before this affectionate daughter, and seemed to her even more cheering than the fair smiles of the rainbow after a season of tempestuous gloom. She continued to take care of her mother, and labor with her hands to supply the many wants of a person recovering from severe sickness, until her own health became too feeble for her longer to do so.

It was with feelings of great concern that the poor girl

heard her mother ask, with an anxious look, concerning the present state of their finances. The daughter quickly replied, 'Our means are not yet exhausted, dear mother;' then added, 'do not trouble yourself about that; we shall do nicely. I have been very economical during your sickness, as you have always taught me to be.'

'I do not doubt it, my dear child,' replied Mrs. Johnson, with emotion which she could scarcely control; 'but I fear from your appearance you have failed to take proper care of your own health.'

The entrance of a friend prevented any further conversation at that time, and Frances felt relieved that her mother had interrogated her no further upon the subject. As soon, however, as they were again by themselves, Mrs. Johnson renewed her inquiries in regard to their remaining funds. She had been too sick to have any care respecting passing events, consequently knew not what had been expended in supplying their wants. Now that her health was slowly returning, and she began to take upon herself her wonted cares, she very naturally felt solicitous whether she still possessed means to render herself and daughter comfortable. 'Frances,' said she, 'I wish you to ascertain the exact amount of money we have.'

Her daughter felt this to be a hard request, but told her mother she would comply with it ere long. 'Cannot you do so now, when no one is here but ourselves?' asked she.

The kind-feeling girl found it hard to offer an excuse for not doing so, and was obliged to gratify her beloved parent. 'Mother,' said she, hesitatingly, after examining

the contents of her purse, 'we have not a great deal of money left.'

'How much?' inquired Mrs. Johnson, anxiously.

'About fifteen shillings,' replied the daughter.

'I thought you was going to say fifteen dollars,' responded the mother. 'If you have only that number of shillings, I suppose your father must have taken some of it when he left.'

'He did,' answered Frances; 'and may we not now expect to receive something from him ere long?'

'We must not be disappointed should it be otherwise,' said this afflicted lady, with a sigh. 'I am greatly perplexed,' added she. 'I know if I would promise my friends that I would never consent to live with your father again, neither you nor myself would ever want a genteel support; but I dare not do so. I have solemnly pledged myself to be faithful to your unfortunate father, in the sacred relation I sustain to him, and cannot violate this covenant with impunity. As I am at present situated, I know not what to do. I see no way in which, under existing circumstances, we can procure a livelihood.'

'I do,' eagerly rejoined Frances, 'so do not feel anxious, my dear mother. I can, with the use of my needle, provide for both you and myself, and sewing is certainly an honorable employment.'

'That is true, my child,' replied Mrs. Johnson, 'but I greatly fear your feeble health would prove inadequate to the task you so cheerfully assign yourself.'

'I trust not,' responded the daughter, in a pleasant tone. 'I hope you will soon recover your wonted strength, and then I shall have most of the time to devote to my needle.'

'But,' answered her mother, 'at present it is very important that you should have a season of rest.'

'I do not feel very well to-day,' said Frances, 'but trust that soon my health will improve; and believe me, I shall labor very cheerfully, as it ever affords me pleasure to make efforts for your sake.'

Her mother in silence encircled the neck of the lovely girl with her arms, and wept. The daughter was affected, yet endeavored to divert the thoughts of this much-loved parent from their gloomy prospects.

At this time a letter was brought in, addressed to Mrs. Johnson. She hastily broke the seal and perused its contents. It was from her husband. As on former occasions, the conscience-stricken man conjured his neglected wife to forgive his unkindness, and regard him favorably if she could.

He informed her that he had been so fortunate as to procure a good situation in a flourishing town on the bank of the Mohawk river, where his previous history was unknown, and thither he entreated his abused wife to come to him, accompanied by his amiable daughter. This forgiving lady immediately dictated a kind letter to her once more repentant husband, which was penned by her daughter and forwarded without delay.

Mrs. Johnson thought it strange that her husband did not allude to her straitened circumstances, but strove to regard him as favorably as possible. She was willing to think he did not fully understand her situation. Without in the least reproaching him for his neglect, she made him acquainted with the feeble state of both her own and daughter's health; also of the very low condition of their

funds. When Mr. Johnson perused this letter, he was pierced to the heart by a reflection of the distress he had caused his innocent family. One fact stated in the letter affected him more than anything he had ever before met with. This was a knowledge of the course pursued by his worthy daughter, to save her mother from suffering from want, or from becoming dependent upon the benevolence of friends who blamed her as the cause of the very sufferings she endured. Frances, without the knowledge of her mother, added a postscript to her letter, in which she communicated to her father the important fact respecting the labor she had been obliged to perform during his absence, trusting it might be of use to inform him of it. She judged rightly upon this point. He was overcome with a sense of his own guilt, and the noble-mindedness of his spirited daughter.

'How very ungrateful,' said this self-upbraiding man, mentally, 'to one of the very best of wives, and loveliest of children too, have I proved, during these many years! would that I could recall the past! but as that is impossible, I pray that I may be enabled to make all amends in my power for the wrongs I have done.'

He wrote again to his wife, enclosing in the letter ample means to defray all needful expenses, and hastily forwarding it, longed for the time when the health of his wife would allow her to join him. He did not forget to give Frances a strict charge to do as little as possible, adding, 'I suppose it is necessary for you to make some exertion for your mother's sake; I shall never forgive myself for having been the means of bringing upon my

daughter the hardship of laboring for the maintenance of an invalid mother.'

When Mrs. Johnson had finished reading this last sentence, in a tone of surprise she exclaimed, '"Laboring for the maintenance of an invalid mother!" why Frances, what can your father mean? If you have done anything of which I am ignorant, I hope you will now acquaint me with it; I must know everything; tell me all, or I shall feel I have lost your confidence.'

The affectionate daughter blushed and hesitated a few moments ere she replied, in a winning tone, 'Mother, I did not wish you to know how much I was perplexed during your illness, knowing full well that it would increase your sufferings. We were left by father with only a trifling sum of money in the house, and the almost constant demands upon your purse, during your sickness, would have left us penniless long ago, if I had not earned with my needle, from week to week, a sufficient sum to meet our wants.'

She then, in answer to the questions of her mother, informed her of every particular respecting this interesting period in the history of her life. A feeling of exultation pervaded the breast of Mrs. Johnson, as she heard her daughter relate the account of the self-sacrificing efforts she had made for her mother's comfort, and also to hide if possible the enormity of her father's guilt, while she tenderly enfolded her in her arms, feeling that this ever-beloved child was now doubly dear to her.

A week or two after this time, this faithful wife ventured to set out on her journey to the place where her husband

now resided, in company with Frances. Thinking it inexpedient to remove their furniture to their new home, she left it in charge of one of her friends. She left this city where she had for many years resided, and to which she was much attached, with a heavy heart. Her daughter, too, felt that she was going from friends and home to a place of strangers. She sighed on reflecting that she had taken leave of the spot where she had spent the happiest years of her life. Here her early childhood was passed; and often, after she found herself settled in a new dwelling in a remote place, she could with sincerity have adopted the following lines:

Home of my childhood! how I love
  In solitude to muse on thee;
And as through fancy's realms I rove,
  My infant sports again to see.

How dear to mem'ry is the spot
  Where oft I danced in childish mirth;
The spot where want and care came not —
  To me the Paradise of earth.

Happy, O happy then was I,
  My heart was gay, my step was light;
Would childhood's days had ne'er gone by,
  And I had ne'er felt sorrow's blight.

I dreamed not then that friends grew cold,
  I thought life's path was strewed with flowers;
Fair Hope a flattering story told,
  Then pointed to elysian bowers.

I dreamed of bliss; but ah! I found
That vision far too bright to last;
Pleasure has proved an empty sound,
Since childhood's golden hours have passed.

Now, oft in pensive hours I turn,
In mem'ry, fondly back to thee,
Home of my childhood, while I mourn,
That I no more thy joys may see.

Mr. Johnson appeared happy, though humbled, at being favored again with the society of those dear friends who had so often sorrowed on his account; and his deportment and good resolutions again encouraged them to hope that he had entirely forsaken the path of immorality. The effect produced upon this father, by the peculiarly dutiful conduct of his beloved daughter, was more abiding than any which he had ever experienced before; and it is charitably hoped that through the instrumentality of his pious wife and considerate and interesting child, he not only became a better member of society, but was prepared for a holier state of existence beyond the grave.

Through the influence of Frances, he who had so long proved himself an unnatural father, was led to seek again the daughter he had for so many years abandoned, and made that unexpected visit with which the reader is already acquainted. It was a source of the highest gratification to Frances, ever after the return of her father from his visit to New England, to reflect that although she could not behold her sister, she still knew exactly how and where she was situated; and also that she could form a correct idea of her personal appearance and character. From

the description given of her by her father, and from a communication she received from Susan through the medium of that parent, she felt assured that her far distant and unseen sister cherished a lively interest in her welfare, and longed to cultivate a friendship with her, not only because she was a relative, but because she had learned to regard her with feelings of complacency on account of virtues which she believed she possessed.

The spirit of Frances was cheered by the unfeigned sympathy manifested by Susan in all the peculiar trials of her past life. She felt that her sister rightly estimated the character of their weak and erring father; that the interest they felt for him was mutual; and what more than any thing else was a source of consolation to Frances, and her mother also, was the assurance, that unknown to each other, these three friends had long and earnestly supplicated a Throne of Grace in behalf of him who was a prodigal, not only from the house of his Heavenly Father, but from those who were his nearest friends on earth. It was a sweet reflection to each of this party, so peculiarly situated in regard to each other, that their prayers, in some measure had been answered, and the object of their tender solicitude, though at the eleventh hour, snatched as a brand from the burning. Although it is not known that these sisters ever met, this side of the grave, it is believed they rejoiced together in spirit over him, who for a long season was lost, but at length by almighty grace was found and rescued from the power of sin and everlasting death.

It is not certainly known whether either Susan or Frances lived long after the occurrence of the events above

described. There is reason, however, to believe that both of these sisters were allowed to spend some years in exerting a happy influence, not only within the sacred circle of their own sweet home, but upon all around them; and their history affords a happy illustration of the oft-repeated assertion, that moral and intellectual worth, when combined in the character of any individual, render such truly valuable.

CHAPTER XX.

Adeline Weldron's visit to an invalid — Gratitude — Adeline imitates the virtues of her grandfather and mother — Sorrowful incident — Adeline — Inconsistency of her father — Adeline becomes the wife of a Missionary — Her death in a foreign land.

'I AM burdened with a weight of obligations,' said Mrs. Adams, a poor invalid, to Adeline Weldron, as she entered her sick-room.

'To whom?' inquired Adeline, smiling.

'To many kind friends,' answered the sick woman; 'but to no one more than yourself, Miss Weldron.'

'If I have done as much as duty required for you,' replied she, 'I am glad; certainly I have done no more.'

'I think otherwise,' responded Mrs. Adams, affectionately extending her hand towards her young friend; 'I have abundant reason to feel grateful to you, but gratitude is so delightful an emotion to cherish, that I cannot feel sorry it is so.'

Adeline, who had taken the proffered hand of her suffering friend, gently pressed it, while an expression of kind feeling beamed from her countenance. 'You are a happy woman, Mrs. Adams,' said the young lady, 'and I am almost tempted to envy you.'

'I am not always happy, rejoined the other; 'sometimes I feel very much dissatisfied with my condition, and

then I am very miserable; much of the time, however, I trust I realize that my daily lot is appointed by Him who *doeth all things well*, and then I am contented; for

> "I can do all things, and can bear
> All suffering, if my Lord be near."'

'We are poor creatures indeed,' said Adeline, 'unless we constantly obtain help from on high; but I can stay only a few moments at this time. I wish to know exactly how you are this morning, and if there is any one article of food you particularly crave to-day, I wish you would tell me what it is.'

'Thank you, dear Miss Weldron;' then, having answered her questions, added, 'I never, never can repay your kindness.'

'I am more than paid already,' replied Adeline, with a smile, 'for all the kind acts I have ever performed; you must not forget the encouraging remark that it is far "more blessed to give than to receive."' She then bade Mrs. Adams 'good morning,' and walked cheerfully towards her home. On her way thither she stopped to procure some little articles of nourishment, which she soon prepared, after reaching her own dwelling, and sent immediately to the sick lady. At the time the servant handed these articles to the nurse, which were exceedingly grateful to the taste of the individual for whom they were intended, a lady was present to whom Mrs. Adams said, with a feeling of animation, 'Miss Weldron has indeed been a very kind friend to me during my illness, and from what I have seen and know of her, I believe she is kind and benevolent to all.'

'The grand-daughter of such a man as Aaron Weldron could not well be expected to be otherwise,' answered the lady, 'as he was one of the kindest of the kind. The father of Adeline does not imitate all the virtues of his long-lamented parent, although he was, nominally, a Christian; the members of his family are often pained at his inconsistencies. It is true,' continued the lady, 'he is benevolent to the needy, and gives liberally on many occasions; still there is an evident heartlessness and a want of refinement in each act he performs, which despoils it of its loveliness.'

'Does Adeline resemble her mother in character?' asked Mrs. Adams.

'She does,' replied her friend.

'I have never seen her,' responded the other, 'but have been told she has been for many years an invalid.'

'That is true,' rejoined the lady; 'yet in her feeble state of health she makes herself a blessing to all around her. There is one circumstance which occurred under my own observation, which will give you some idea of the character of this excellent woman, that I think you would like to hear me relate.'

'I am sure I shall,' said Mrs. Adams, 'for I am so much attached to her daughter. I love her even without seeing her, and like Cowper can say,

> "Friend of my friend, I love thee, though unknown,
> And boldly call thee, being his, my own."

'This is often true,' answered the lady, 'of those who have feeling hearts—'

'Now let me hear your story,' said the sick woman, interrupting her.

'Perhaps,' said her friend, 'you are aware that the house of Mr. Weldron is situated on the bank of a lake in the vicinity of a canal which was made not many years since. At the time this canal was being constructed, many of the sons of *Green Erin* came with their families and resided in *shantees* erected for their temporary shelter, in the neighbourhood of Mr. Weldron's farm.

'One lovely evening, when I happened to be visiting this dear family, we were alarmed by a cry of distress. It was a fearful cry, and was caused by the sudden death of a woman who had lived in one of these huts. She had been for some time the victim of consumption; still, those about her appeared to have been ignorant of the fact, and herself was insensible, too, of her danger. The husband of this woman, on going home at night from his work, to his great consternation, found his wife in the agonies of death. He knew not that she was dying, but thinking her "*very bad*," as he expressed himself, he screamed aloud for help, crying, "Do go and fetch the doctor — do go and tell him to come soon, or she will be dead."

'On hearing this distressing cry, Mrs. Weldron sent to inquire the cause. The messenger soon returned and informed us of what I have related. He said, "the poor woman has just died — she was dead before the physician saw her. It would make your hearts bleed," continued he, "to see the little girl who has been left motherless by this dispensation of Providence; she mourns as if she indeed realized the loss of a mother."

'Our hearts, as may be imagined, were pained by the

recital of these facts, and Mrs. Weldron at once determined to do all she could to alleviate the sorrows of these afflicted ones. As the weather was exceedingly warm, the remains of the poor Irish woman had of necessity to be buried on the next day after her death. Poor little Margaret, for that was the name of the child bereaved of her mother, felt sad indeed when the face of that friend was forever hidden from her view. She had a father and a brother, yet she felt lonely; and she was alone, though surrounded by a motley throng of her own country-people. There were none who seemed to care for her.

'The forlorn situation of little Margaret drew forth the tenderest sympathies of Mrs. Weldron, and she said not to the helpless child, "Be warmed, fed, and clothed," as too many do, without relieving the necessities of the dependant, but she kindly took her to her own dwelling, assuring the helpless little one that she should ever find in her a friend. Margaret was a bright, interesting child, and in many respects was a comfort to her benefactress. She lived with this lady until she was old enough to take care of herself. This is but one of the many instances which might be adduced to show the benevolence of this kind lady. The scenes which daily occur in her house, constantly exemplify the religion professed by Mrs. Weldron and her daughter.'

This last observation was most truthfully affirmed. The influence of piety was continually felt wherever these individuals were called to act. Many years rapidly succeeded each other, without the occurrence of any uncommon event. It is true Mrs. Weldron was often prostrated by debilitating disease, to which she was subject, and during

these seasons the family were afflicted deeply; but as soon as she recovered her wonted strength, they were cheered by the hope that she might be spared even to old age, to gladden their hearts.

When Adeline arrived at the age of twenty, her mother was again laid low by an illness from which she never recovered. She passed away from earth, leaving her mantle to fall upon that daughter who had for many years administered to her comfort, and had been a most pleasant companion.

After the death of this much-loved parent, Adeline was called to pass through trying scenes. Previous to this event, she had been addressed by a gentleman for whose character she had ever entertained the highest respect, upon the subject of forming a matrimonial connection. She had long been far from feeling indifferent towards him; still, she frankly told him she had resolved to remain unmarried during the life of her mother, as the feeble state of her health at all times called upon her to pay that unremitting attention which she was better qualified than any other person to bestow.

Not long after she was bereaved of this valued friend, the addresses of this gentleman, who was a young clergyman, were renewed, and accepted by Adeline. His mind had long been exercised upon the subject of becoming a missionary. He longed to carry the glad tidings of a Savior's love to heathen lands, and greatly desired to find some christian female, with a congenial spirit, who would be willing to unite her destiny with his, and accompany him thither. He made known his views and feelings to Ade-

line, and was much gratified to learn that her mind had long been exercised upon the same subject.

'I should have expressed my feelings relative to this important topic, long ago,' said she, 'had I not considered it my duty to remain with my mother, so long as I could be the means of soothing her life of suffering. As she needs me not, now, I think the leadings of Providence are such as to justify me in deciding it is my duty to resolve, in Divine strength, to labor for the good of those who never heard of a Savior, during the remainder of my life.'

In a few days, she cheerfully consented to become the wife of Mr. H——, the young clergyman referred to. Her father approved of their intended union, on conditions that they should never leave this country. 'I am willing,' said Mr. Weldron, 'that my daughter should become a missionary to those residing in the great Valley of the West, and I will contribute liberally to further the object; but I cannot consent that you should go to a foreign land.'

Adeline meekly replied to her father that she had supposed he would be willing she should go wherever duty seemed to call.

'Are you sure it is duty, and not inclination, which calls?' asked Mr. Weldron.

'I am sure it is not inclination, my dear father, which prompts me to desire to leave my elegant and much-loved home, to endure the privations of a missionary in a pagan land. Neither would inclination prompt me to forego the enjoyment of the society of refined and very dear friends, to associate with the ignorant and degraded. I feel that I must go that I may be the means of winning souls to Christ. I cannot be blessed in remaining at home. Do,

father, cheerfully consent to my going to India, to bless, under God, some benighted souls there.'

'I never can nor will consent to have you leave your own country,' responded Mr. Weldron.

'But, beloved father,' rejoined Adeline, 'when I was a very little girl I well remember hearing you pray, many times, while kneeling at the family altar, that God would raise up and send forth missionaries, to illumine the benighted portions of the earth; more recently, too, you have offered the same petition; and now that our Heavenly Father has made you the means of raising up one, in your own family, you are unwilling to send her upon the errand of mercy.'

Her father, although interested for the thousands who are ready to perish, was wont to be periodical in his feelings upon the subject, and felt it hard to make so great a sacrifice as to part with his daughter. He continued unreconciled, and even refused to see her united to one who had been accepted by the Board of Missions to carry the gospel to India.

Adeline had a severe conflict between a sense of duty, and a desire to gratify her before indulgent parent. Many days did she struggle, weep, and pray, ere she finally decided that her obligation to go was imperative. After the conflict was over in the mind of this devoted young female, her spirit was composed, and she was cheerful. Notwithstanding she was busily engaged in preparing for her anticipated departure, she contrived, by a systematic effort, to gain a little time almost every day, while she remained at home, to do good as she had opportunity. Many a sorrowing heart, which was cheered by her endeavors and smiles during the last few weeks ere she

bid them adieu forever, long, in fond remembrance, delighted to dwell upon these acts of disinterested benevolence. A relative of Adeline gives the following account of an incident which occured not long before she left her native land.

'It was on a bleak day in the latter part of November, that Adeline informed me she purposed calling upon a family that was in deep affliction. Death had suddenly entered this dwelling, and deprived them of a much-loved wife and mother. She asked me to accompany her, saying, "it may be a means of good to each of us." I did not wish to go, but Adeline said she would not take an excuse from me on this occasion; I must comply with her wishes. We went; and never will the impression made upon my mind, by witnessing the scene, be obliterated.

'This family was not extremely poor, but was among the many emigrants to the West who had purchased large tracts of land, at the expense of very many of the comforts of life.

The whole family, consisting of six persons, lived in one room; in it they cooked, washed, ate, and slept; in this room, too, that wife and mother had sickened and died. At the time we entered the dwelling, her corpse lay in one corner of the room, while supper was preparing in another. To me, who had never beheld such a scene, this spectacle was truly revolting.

'After we were seated, we were informed that a few moments previous to the death of this poor woman, her physician came in. On seeing him, she exclaimed, "O, doctor! cannot you do something to relieve my poor aching head?" He shook his head in silence. "Then," said

the distressed woman, with emphasis, "I must die — O, I cannot, will not die! Lord have mercy on my soul! O, that I had, while in health, prepared for this awful hour!"

'These were the last words uttered by her who was most dear to this bereaved family; and sad indeed was the impression they had left upon the minds of each one, old enough to understand their meaning. When we arrived at the house, which was soon after the woman had died, the anguish manifested by the remaining members of the family was very great. Fain would I have left this house of sorrow, could I have done so without rudeness. Not so with my dear cousin Adeline. It was a scene in which the loveliness of her character shone with peculiar lustre. While my heart sickened, and, as I confess, shrunk from witnessing the scene, as I saw these little motherless children running about and calling for that mother whose inanimate form lay stretched in death's icy embrace before their eyes, she tenderly expressed her sympathy in a most winning manner.

'With the most affectionate concern for their spiritual welfare, Adeline, as soon as proper, entered into conversation with the members of this weeping family. She learned with pain that the afflicted husband was unacquainted with the only source of consolation; but there is reason to hope that her kind and faithful conversation, will be remembered by him with emotions of the liveliest gratitude, through a long eternity. He was one among the many who felt he could not spare her, when the hour arrived on which she took leave of her friends to go and labor for those in a foreign land.'

The last religious meeting at which Adeline was present,

in her native place, was a season which can never be forgotton by any who attended it. There was scarcely an individual in the assembly, but what was aware of the fact that it was the last time they should ever behold her who had long been regarded by them with an interest rarely equalled. It was on the evening of a calm, peaceful sabbath, and a feeling of more than usual quietude and solemnity pervaded the audience which at that time had assembled, under circumstances of peculiar interest.

When Adeline entered the house, all eyes were turned towards her. Her appearance was unusually interesting. Her countenance was pale with deep emotion. She could boast of no personal beauty; but there was something attractive in her looks, which when once beheld, even by an entire stranger, was not soon forgotton. Hers was a countenance in which the lines of genius might readily be traced, and the expression of her features was an exact index to her strong and well-balanced mind. Her eyes were dark gray, and beamed with intelligence. Firmness and determination were strikingly portrayed in her appearance and character.

Now that she was on the eve of leaving the home of her childhood, probably never more to behold its lovely walks and shaded bowers, or listen to the endearing tones of friends who had been the companions of her school-days; probably, too, never again to behold the affectionate expression of a father, brother, or sister's eye, as they had often beamed with tenderness upon her, she realized the sacrifice she was about to make, and wept. And she wept not alone.

At the close of the meeting, the following beautiful stanzas were sung by the choir:

'Yes, my native land, I love thee;
All thy scenes, I love them well.
Friends, connexions, happy country!
Can I bid you all farewell?
Can I leave you,
Far in heathen lands to dwell?

'Home! thy joys are passing lovely;
Joys no stranger heart can tell!
Happy home! 't is sure I love thee;
Can I — can I say — Farewell?
Can I leave thee,
Far in heathen lands to dwell?

'Scenes of sacred peace and pleasure,
Holy days and Sabbath-bells,
Richest, brightest, sweetest treasure!
Can I say a last farewell?
Can I leave you,
Far in heathen lands to dwell?

'Yes; I hasten from you gladly;
From the scenes I love so well!
Far away, ye billows, bear me;
Lovely native land, farewell!
Pleased I leave thee,
Far in heathen lands to dwell.

'In the deserts let me labor,
On the mountain let me tell,
How he died — the blessed Savior —
To redeem a world from hell;
Let us hasten,
Far in heathen lands to dwell.

'Bear me on, thou restless ocean,
Let the winds my canvass swell —
Heaves my heart with warm emotion,
While I go far hence to dwell.
Glad I bid thee,
Native land, — Farewell — Farewell!'

Ere the hymn was concluded, the voices of many, who first united with the choir, were stifled with the intensity of emotions awakened by the sentiments expressed, while many continued singing, with tremulous voices, to the close. After the benediction had been pronounced, and the congregation commenced leaving the house, a large group of affectionate friends gathered around Adeline, eager to give the parting hand of friendship, and offer some little token of grateful remembrance for her acceptance. It was hard, very hard, for many to leave her. 'O, I cannot, cannot say, farewell!' was uttered by many who stood irresolute to move, gazing for the last time upon the beloved countenance of this youthful Christian.

Adeline was at length obliged to say, addressing the weeping company, 'My dear, dear friends, farewell! I love you fondly, but I can, and must say, farewell; this moment we must part, and perhaps to meet no more on earth!'

She then immediately left the sanctuary, which was to her indeed a hallowed spot. She walked home in silence, followed by the tears, prayers, and benedictions of those who had known her from early infancy. When she had reached that dwelling which she was in a few hours to leave forever, she hastened to her chamber, where her agitated spirit soon found relief in fervent prayer. Then,

having unburdened her soul, with a feeling of child-like confidence, to her Father in Heaven, she retired to rest, and her wearied frame was soon refreshed by a season of quiet sleep.

When Adeline awoke, on the following morning, she felt strengthened and upborne by a sense of the presence of that power which is alone able to sustain the soul amid the trials of this darksome world. Ere she left her room, she looked again to that rock which she felt was higher than herself. When she met the family, she noticed a sadness depicted in the countenance of each. As they seated themselves at the breakfast table, the seat of her father was vacant. They waited some moments, expecting him soon to join them. Instead of this, he sent an excuse for remaining in his room.

Adeline was grieved, as she reflected that she was the cause of giving her remaining parent pain. It was a trial to her to be married without his consenting to be present during the performance of the ceremony; yet it was what she felt that duty required her to submit to. That morning was the time appointed for the occurrence of this interesting event; and it took place while Mr. Weldron remained in his own room.

In one short hour from this time, Adeline was to take leave of her home and set out upon her journey to the city from which she was to embark for India. Her heart sickened in anticipation of being obliged to go without again beholding her father. The thought, too, was overwhelming that he could not be reconciled to what, in her view, was plainly his duty.

The temperament of Mr. Weldron was ardent, and all

the naturally strong feelings of a parent were awakened in his breast. He loved Adeline with a strength of attachment which is seldom surpassed; and to part with her thus, seemed even more distressing than being called to follow her to the tomb.

As the moment drew near, when Adeline could remain at home no longer, with an anxious heart she sought her father. While passing through an entry leading to his chamber, he met her, with sorrowful countenance, and extending his hand towards her, he said, in a tremulous voice, 'I cannot bid you farewell!' then clasping her hand with both of his, he continued, while tears ran down his cheeks, 'Remember, my child, I condemn you not because your views of duty differ from my own; you have a right to act independently of my wishes; but by doing so you have cast a gloom over my future life.' He then took from his pocket a roll of bank bills, and placed them in the hands of his daughter, saying, 'Take this money, my dear girl, and if at any future time you should be in want of funds, send immediately to me, and your wants shall always be supplied.'

Adeline could not speak; her heart was too full for utterance, and her father hastened back to his room and closed the door. The afflicted daughter soon joined the friends she had left below; and, after having been affectionately embraced by an only and dearly beloved brother and sister, and bidding a fond adieu to a large circle of weeping friends who had assembled to see her depart, she was led by her husband to a carriage in which they were to be conveyed to a neighboring place, to take passage in a steam boat to Providence. After stopping to spend

the night with some relatives in that city, they proceeded to Boston, where, being joined by two other missionaries, they embarked on board a vessel bound to India. Soon the ship proudly spread her canvass to the breeze, and amid the soul-moving manifestations of the interest of the many who had assembled on the wharf to take a last look at these self-denying Christians, they were soon wafted out of sight of their anxious friends.

The majestic ship gallantly ploughed its way through the billowy ocean, day after day, and Adeline, now Mrs. H——, realized that each succeeding hour was removing her more remote from the friends she so fondly loved; still, she repented not of the choice she had made. She suffered much during the voyage, from that sickness so peculiar to those not accustomed to the motion of a vessel at sea; yet she enjoyed much during the intervals of release from suffering, in observing some of the wonders of the mighty deep. She addressed several letters to her friends, while on the passage, in which she gave a pleasing description of what she had witnessed. She pictured in one of her letters, the grandeur, beauty, and sublimity of a water-spout which she had seen at a distance, in such vivid colors that the impression made upon the minds of those who read the description, was such as to lead them to imagine they had themselves beheld it.

She noticed in her communications many little incidents that occurred, calculated to impress the mind with a pleasing sense of the goodness and greatness of that Being who beholdeth 'the nations as a drop of a bucket,' and 'taketh up the isles as a very little thing.'

After a prosperous voyage, Mrs. H —— and her com-

panions rejoiced to hail the shores of their future home. They landed; and as their feet pressed the soil of a country shrouded in heathenish darkness, their hearts glowed with pity for those benighted pagans, for whose sake they had foregone the endearing comforts of home. After remaining at Calcutta a few days, at the residence of a missionary under the patronage of the same board by which they were sent out, they removed to a station a little more than a hundred miles distant, which had been designated as the place of their labors. Ere she had arrived at the place of her destination, Mrs. H—— had embraced several opportunities of forwarding letters to her friends in America, the reception of which gladdened the hearts of those to whom they were addressed. Her father broke the seal of the one directed to himself with a throbbing heart, and while reading it, both wept and smiled. Previous to the reception of this letter, he had regarded his daughter as one already dead to those she had left. Now, on perusing a cheerful and interesting communication, penned by her own dear hand, he felt almost as if she had returned to him again; and from this time felt that lively interest in every account which came from India, that can only be understood and appreciated by such as have friends residing in a pagan land.

Soon after arriving at the station, Mrs. H—— forwarded another package of letters to her native place. In one of them, she thus describes her journey from Calcutta to her new home:

'Mr. H—— and myself parted from our new friends at Dr. C——'s with feelings of heart-felt regret. You cannot imagine how soon we became attached to them;

and I am more than ever convinced that it is unity of feeling and sentiment which really endears persons to each other, more than long-continued acquaintance. While in the dear family at Calcutta, we realized that our hearts were united in one greatand glorious object; and a spirit of Christian love pervaded this sweet circle of friends. No wonder, then, that our hearts were pained on leaving them; but

> '"Trials must and will befall;
> But with humble faith to see
> Love inscribed upon them all,
> This is happiness to me."

'Soon after we left Calcutta, we were obliged to travel in an open cart, drawn by four oxen, during nearly all the remainder of our journey. You may well imagine the appearance we made, seated in this uncomfortable vehicle. I know you would have laughed, had you seen us; and had it not been that our minds were solemnly impressed, in view of the important object for which we were making the sacrifice of personal comforts, I believe we should have been strongly tempted to indulge in levity at our own expense.

The reflection that we came hither for the purpose of doing good to those who never heard of a Savior's love, is never forgotten by us. We suffered much, while slowly plodding our way over the long and rough path which served only as an apology for a road. As we contrasted the many improvements of our own dear country, with the misery, indolence, and degradation of that in which we expect to spend the remainder of our lives, we sighed to

think of the poor heathen. After a tedious journey, we arrived at the mission house, where we now reside.'

In another letter she said, 'Though I strive to bear each allotment of Providence with the cheerfulness becoming a Christian, I am every day severely tried by the filthy habits of the natives we are obliged to employ as servants. They are very uncleanly in their persons, so much so that I have seen the dirt hanging in strings from their ears and elbows. We are obliged to employ one individual to wash, another to iron, a third to cook, and so on through every department of household employment.'

Nothing more of particular interest is known of Mrs. H—— by the writer, until nearly two years from the time she had left home. At this period a letter having a black seal, reached her father. He took it, and with a trembling hand, opened it. It was from Mr. H——, and contained the unwelcome intelligence that Adeline was no longer an inhabitant of earth. Said Mr. H——, 'Our dear, and much loved Adeline, has left us — left us, too, at a time when to human view it seemed most needful for her to remain here. But she was ripe for Heaven. She had probably overtaxed her strength, in laboring to acquire the language of the natives, and I fear allowed herself less exercise than was really necessary for the preservation of her health. She had acquired the language, and was becoming increasingly useful at the station, when she became suddenly and alarmingly ill. Every means in my power to procure, was used to save her precious life; but they were of no avail. She sank rapidly; but, as her bodily strength decreased, day by day, her immortal spirit rose

with a strength almost angelic. She spoke of her approaching dissolution with unmingled satisfaction.

'Said she to me, just before her death, "I know not what is best for me; but I have perfect confidence in our Heavenly Father, and to him I have committed myself, my friends, and the cause so dear, I trust to both our hearts." Her babe, which was only a few days old, she regarded with all a mother's fondness; yet said, with composure, addressing me, while gazing upon its innocent and lovely features, "I commend this darling child to your care, my dear husband, under the care of our Father in Heaven." She continued, looking around with a smile upon her attendants, "I am going soon to be with my Savior. Tell my father, sister, brother, and other friends, not to mourn that I am thus early called from the earthly vineyard of my master;" then added, "I rejoice that it is my privilege to ascend to the rest of Heaven, on the same morning of the week on which my blessed Redeemer arose from the dead."

'These were the last words she uttered; and she soon fell quietly asleep in death. Our fragile infant did not long survive its mother. I may not attempt to describe my feelings, as these two dear objects of affection were so suddenly snatched from me. Yet it is right; I cannot repine. You, my dear sir, may judge of my feelings, in some degree, and I feel assured of your sympathy.'

Mr. Weldron, as may be supposed, was deeply afflicted; but it cannot truthfully be said that he did not murmur. The other members of the family, too, were deeply afflicted by the death of their dear sister, but acquiesced in the will of Providence.

The father always spoke with regret of the fact that his daughter had felt it her duty to become a missionary; and often, when giving an account of this trial, expressed the feeling that it was one of the heaviest which a parent could be called to endure.

'O no,' said a friend, to whom he made this remark, on one occasion, 'I know you have been afflicted; but lightly, when your trials are compared with those of many.'

'I doubt it,' answered Mr. Weldron.

'Could you hear,' responded the other, 'the story of the sorrows of one whom I have known, you would adopt my sentiment.'

'Was there any thing in the history peculiarly interesting?' inquired Mr. Weldron.

'There was,' replied his friend; 'the trials of my friend were such as seldom fall to the lot of mortals. If you desire to hear something of the history, I will give you an account of it.'

Mr. Weldron informed him that it would be interesting to listen to such a relation. As he heard the touching tale of the sorrows of Mrs. Jefford, he realized that his own affliction was light compared with hers. The reader will find this story in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXI.

Early Life of Mrs. Jefford — Frederic and Myra — Dereliction of Frederic — Mr. Hilton — His kindness — Power of temptation — Frederic suddenly deserts his home and becomes deeply engaged in crime — Friends ignorant of his fate — Thrilling scene while on his last voyage — Frederic's repentance and confession — His execution — Affecting scene at the home of his mother.

MRS. JEFFORD, a remote relative of the Weldron family, belonged to what is termed the middle class in society. Her parents were respectable, and much beloved in the circle in which they moved. Nothing remarkable occurred in their family during the youthful years of Mrs. Jefford.

If a description of her person is attempted, it must be said, that she was not handsome, nor even scarcely comely; but she was what is generally called a good, a *very* good girl. Almost every one who knew her, loved her; and it was often remarked that Myra Eldred (as her name was when a girl), had but one visible fault, which was a want of firmness. She was far too prone to yield her opinions and wishes to the opinions and wishes of others; and was often, by doing so, betrayed into great mistakes.

Soon after she attained the age of womanhood, she was settled in life, having become the companion of an intelligent and worthy gentleman. This couple commenced life

in a pleasant town, situated in the smallest New England State; and considered themselves happy, as well they might, for they were possessed of every necessary comfort. They were prospered, and had a sufficient means to relieve the wants of the needy, and cultivated a large benevolence. If they erred in this respect, it was because they were charitable to a fault. Of them it might with truth be said, they stopped not to ask the cause which made a fellow-being poor, —

> 'Or why he help demands;'

for, to those of their minds,

> 'The voice of charity is kind;
> She thinketh nothing wrong;
> To every fault she seemeth blind,
> Nor vaunteth with her tongue.'

They had also another, and a far higher source of enjoyment. They had chosen, in early life, the God of their fathers to be their God, and their everlasting portion. Years passed quietly, and they had two lovely children, — a son and daughter, upon whom they doted. The son, whose name was Frederic, was a bold, spirited, energetic boy. He was easily influenced either to do right or wrong; and, as he associated indiscriminately with the boys in the neighborhood in which he resided, was often led, by their influence and his daring disposition, to commit acts which caused his parents great pain.

After he had been guilty of some offence, his parents would forbid his mingling with pernicious society for some little time. But, after the lapse of a few days or weeks,

yielding too easily to his importunities and trusting to his promises, they would again withdraw their restraint, and he would thus be allowed the society of the vicious. The sin of Eli might justly be charged upon his parents. They very often said, '*Why do ye so, my son?*' but had not sufficient resolution to restrain him from evil.

As Frederic grew older, two traits were predominant in his character. One was a disposition to remember, with gratitude, kindnesses conferred upon him; the other was a proneness to indulge in the practice of cruelty. His sister, whose name was Myra, was one of the loveliest of girls, and was the delight of her parents. Her brother, too, loved her, and was proud of her. Unfortunately her health was naturally very feeble, and she could not, much of the time, enjoy those active amusements in which young people are wont to engage. Frederic deprecated this fact, as it abridged his pleasures.

'Oh!' he would often say to his sister, when entreated by her to remain at home, 'if you were not always sick, I should take some comfort in staying at home; I should then seldom wish for any other society.'

It must be believed that he expressed his real feelings, when he made this assertion; and, doubtless, if his sister had been able to engage in amusements suited to his taste, it would have had a great tendency to bar those avenues to his heart, into which the baneful influence of the unprincipled found entrance, and dethroned his better feelings.

Some years ere he arrived at manhood, he was deprived by death of his father. The trial of his mother, on this occasion, was enhanced by the waywardness of her son.

There was seldom an hour in which she did not feel anxious on his account. During the life of his father, he had several times been betrayed into the commission of petty, yet disgraceful offences; and after the death of that parent, as he scorned the restraint of his mother, she had reason to tremble lest the indulgence of the same disposition would lead him to commit greater crimes, as he advanced in years. Her fears were realized; and her heart ever after bled at the recollection of the course pursued by her first-born and dearly beloved child.

At the time Mr. Jefford died, Frederic was employed as a clerk in a mercantile house, where his activity and ability rendered him particularly serviceable. He might have continued to increase in usefulness and respectability, could he have been persuaded to abandon his wicked associates; but this he could not be induced to do. The tears and entreaties of his mother and sister united, were unavailing in dissuading him from indulging in midnight revels, and other scenes of dissipation.

The dissolute are generally extravagant in their expenditures. This was particularly true of the dissipated circle in which Frederic moved. The waste of money they esteemed manliness, and scrupled not at the use of any means to procure it for their sinful purposes.

Mrs. Jefford afforded her son a liberal supply of pocket-money, beside his wages, but this did not satisfy his ungenerous demands; he desired more. On one occasion, when his mother gently remonstrated with him, and a sense of gratitude, which was never entirely extinct in his breast, was felt by him, he said, 'Mother, I know you have been good to me, *very good;* you have been ever too indulgent;

I will not reward your tenderness with ingratitude; I intend to repay the generous amount you have furnished me. I cannot do this now,' added he, 'but, believe me, I do not mean that you shall lose anything by me. I have business talents, you know, which, when I am of age, I hope to exert for the accumulation of property; then I shall expect to requite all your favors.'

His mother sighed, as her inconsiderate and reckless son left the house. 'It is true,' said his sister, while tears started from her eyes, 'that Frederic has both taste and talents for business pursuits, but I grieve that he is not fond of books. Had he a taste for profitable reading, it might have been the means of saving him from many temptations, into which he has fallen.'

'I have often wished he had been fond of books,' answered the mother.

'So have I,' responded Myra.

'I shall always blame myself,' said Mrs. Jefford, 'that I was not more decided in enforcing my commands upon Frederic, while he was a boy.'

'But, mother,' rejoined the daughter, 'you were as faithful to him as to myself, I am sure. Himself and not you, it is certain, is chargeable with all his faults.'

'I was, it is true,' responded Mrs. Jefford, 'even more particular with your brother than with yourself. Your dispositions were unlike each other, and I ought ever to have been exceedingly firm with poor Frederic. But regrets are now vain; all I can do now is to entreat him to do right, pray that he may do so, and commend him to an unchangeable God of faithfulness.'

These last-mentioned acts, this tender mother failed not

daily to perform, and her spirit was cheered by faith in the justice and mercy of her Father, God; yet that faith was most deeply, deeply tried. Not many months after the conversation above related occurred, Frederic, who had frequently visited a billiard saloon, and been rather fortunate while at play, had been encouraged by this success to lay down a pledge for a larger sum than he could command, which he lost. This involved him in perplexity; he must pay a gaming debt, or be considered mean, the idea of which he could not endure. 'It would be ungrateful in me,' said he, mentally, 'to apply to my mother in this emergency, because it would grieve her to learn that I need the required sum. But,' thought he again, 'I can borrow this sum of my employer without his knowledge, and refund it in the same manner, as I shall soon regain it at playing.'

Accordingly, the mistaken young man yielded to the temptation, and purloined the sum of three hundred dollars from the merchant, who had entrusted him with the care of his business, while necessarily absent. His employer returned sooner than was expected. Frederic had not been able to replace the money ere his arrival, and the merchant, on examining his cash accounts, missed the money immediately.

The young man had been noticed by a boy who was in another part of the store at the time he took the money, to act in an unusual manner, as he thought; but not daring to indulge a suspicion that he would wrong his employer, dismissed the subject from his mind, and thought no more of it, until inquiry was made respecting the money missing. When the inquiry was made, the youth immediately in-

formed the merchant of what has been already stated, and added, 'I saw Frederic put his hand in his pocket while looking over the money, but dare not say money was in his hand at the time.'

This circumstance, together with the fact that the clerk had alone been entrusted with the care of the money, led the merchant to suppose he certainly must know what had become of the amount gone. Mr. Hilton, the employer and friend of the unhappy young man, immediately asked him to account for the money. The merchant and Frederic were alone at the time, and the clerk, on being thus interrogated, became greatly confused. He attempted to evade the question, but finding it impossible, confessed the whole truth concerning what he had done.

Mr. Hilton regarded the young man with a look expressive of consternation and sorrow. 'Frederic,' said he, in a gentle tone, 'art thou a gambler? can it be that the son of such parents as thine can follow such a practice?'

The guilty one was speechless, and overwhelmed at the unexpected discovery of his crime.

The merchant continued, 'Although thou hast betrayed my confidence, I feel that the cause which induced thee to take such a step, is more to be deprecated than the sin thou hast committed. Yes, my child, rather would I never see a cent, which I doubt not thou didst mean to replace, of what thou hast taken from me, than that thou shouldst gain it at a gambling-house.'

'My mother,' said the mortified youth, 'is able to pay you, and I doubt not will do so.'

'Thy mother?' answered Mr. Hilton, 'Canst thou bear to have her heart pained with a knowledge of thy

misconduct? And thy lovely sister too, shall she be made to weep over the infamy of her only and beloved brother?'

The heart of Frederic was moved, and he silently wept a few moments; then, after much hesitation, said, 'I did not intend to steal from you, Mr. Hilton, and unless I procure the amount I took in the way in which it was lost, I cannot pay you without the help of my mother.'

The young man's employer was a benevolent individual, and a sincere friend to the Jefford family. It is believed he would rather have lost many times three hundred dollars, than have been the means of overwhelming this excellent woman and daughter with grief, by allowing them to know the depth into which Frederic had plunged in vice.

'Frederic,' then responded he, 'thou art the son of a friend I love most dearly; I am thy friend. Gladly would I assist thee to befriend thyself. Promise me that thou wilt abstain from gambling forever, and I will overlook all thou hast done.'

The self-condemned young man regarded this kind friend with a look of surprise and gratitude, while he continued; 'I wish thee to give me thy note for the sum thou hast taken; and when thou art able, thou mayest pay me. But make the promise I desire, and keep it, and I will promise that I will never trouble thee for what thou hast done; reform at once, and thy present disgrace shall ever remain a secret with me.'

The heart of Frederic was, for the time being, melted. He readily promised all his kind friend had wished. He faithfully attended to his business for a short time, spent more of his evenings at home, and his friends were cheered with the hope of his recovery from the path of

folly and dissipation. It was not many months, however, ere he became ensnared by meeting some of his old associates, who ridiculed him upon the subject of becoming serious. He could not endure ridicule, and when sneered at for his sobriety, felt vexed. He was dared to spend that evening at the house of a former acquaintance where a convivial party were assembling.

'I will not be dared to do anything,' said he to his old companions, who were on their way to this house of festivity and mirth; 'you know I never needed courage to go forward in any pursuit,' continued Frederic, half resentfully.

'We know it was so once,' replied one of his designing companions, who well understood the weak side of his character, 'but you are fast becoming religious now, and are afraid to act as heretofore.'

'No, I am not afraid,' answered the young man, 'but it is not convenient for me to accompany you this evening.'

His unprincipled companions laughed contemptuously. Frederic could not brook their sneers and hesitated.

'Come, be a man again, and go with us," said one.

'Our host will be rejoiced to see you,' added another.

The undecided youth did not need much persuasion after what had been said, to induce him to comply with their wishes. He went; and as on former occasions spent a long evening in card-playing, revelry, and dissipation. When first solicited to play at cards, he refused; and when the wine cup was handed him, he at first declined drinking. But he had gone in the way of temptation, and could not be protected from its influence. Having been urged he partook of the exhilarating wine until he became excited. He then joined a party engaged at cards,

and although at first he refused to play except for pleasure, yet being urged, he, under the excitement of the cup of which he had freely partaken, was induced to break the promise made to his disinterested friend; and though at first successful in winning from his competitors, he at length lost; and ere the party separated for the night, was deeply in debt.

The friends of Frederic at home had anxiously looked for his appearance during every moment of that never-to-be-forgotten evening. A few highly valued friends had met at the house of Mrs. Jefford to pass that evening in social enjoyment. Frederic had gone out immediately after tea, and designed to return in a few moments.

The reader is aware of the manner in which he was detained. His mother apologized for his absence to their friends, while she anxiously looked for him, wondering where he could be. When the clock tolled the solemn hour of midnight and her son had not returned, she experienced a feeling of alarm. Hour after hour passed, yet Frederic appeared not. When at length the sun arose, and the expected one was still absent, the feelings of both his mother and his sister almost amounted to agony.

At an early hour in the forenoon, Mrs. Jefford sent to the counting-room to ascertain if her son was there. Mr. Hilton was surprised to learn he was not at home, as he supposed he must have been kept there by indisposition, and had intended to send to inquire the cause of his absence.

Nothing was heard from the young man during the whole of that day, and the anxiety of his friends became more and more intense as each successive hour rolled by.

Day after day passed, and no tidings were heard concerning him.

The distress of his mother and sister was somewhat soothed, by being enabled to commit him to the care of a faithful God, whom they realized was every where present. Yet they felt afflicted, and wept day after day over this strangely absent one.

In the mean time the deluded young man was rapidly proceeding from step to step in vice. After he had left that house, in which he had been ensnared, late on that night, the events of which were so fatal to his peace, he was urged, by one of his companions, who, like himself, was far from being sober, to lodge with him at the hotel at which he boarded. He accepted the invitation, and after they retired to rest was informed by his acquaintance, that he intended leaving early on the following morning for a city at the west. To this city he requested Frederic to accompany him, at the same time mentioning the advantages which that part of the country possessed over this, as an inducement for him to go.

His friend gave a lively description of many exciting scenes through which he had passed in St. Louis, and other places, which fired the bosom of the already excited and deluded young man with an uncontrollable anxiety to visit those places, and mingle in those scenes which he had heard described.

Frederic informed his companion that he was almost tempted to comply with his request. The truth is, a sense of shame led him to dread meeting the calm, yet reproving gaze of Mr. Hilton. He felt he had proved himself ungrateful to that gentleman by his conduct the preceding

night, and knew full well an account of it would soon be made known to him.

'I have not courage sufficient to meet Mr. Hilton again,' said he to his associate; 'when he knows what I have done I fear his confidence in me will be destroyed forever.'

'You need not see him again,' replied the other; 'just go with me to the land of plenty, and you will make your fortune in a few years.'

'I would, were it not for leaving my mother and sister,' answered Frederic.

'Do not be so childish as to suppose you cannot live away from them,' rejoined his unfeeling companion; 'they would soon cease to grieve on account of your absence, although they might feel a little bad at first; you can write to them from any where you may be. You had better make up your mind to start with me in the stage early to-morrow morning.'

'I cannot get my clothes so soon;' responded this wayward son.

'Never mind your clothes,' replied his associate; 'you can get more at places where we stop while on the journey.'

'But I lost last night all the money I had, and became in debt besides, and have not more than one cent in my pocket,' answered the other.

'Never mind that, neither,' said the individual; 'I have funds enough for both of us, and can lend you now as much as you will wish to use in three months or longer. Now, Jefford, you are without excuse, and must decide to journey with me; you will in that region be free to enjoy yourself, as a bird let loose.'

'Well,' said Frederic, 'I am about persuaded to go with you.'

After sleeping an hour or two, these two young men arose and prepared for their journey. They set off in the stage some time before it was light, and travelled several miles before any other passenger was taken into the carriage. The guilty son felt glad of this, because he was now sure his friends would not know in what direction he had gone, for he wished them to remain igorant of this fact until he could write to them from some distant place and inform them that he was doing well. Poor, mistaken young man! that time never arrived.

His associate was faithful to his promise in supplying Frederic with money, and he imagined himself happy, as he was constantly excited by what he termed 'moderate drinking.' He was pleased with every thing he saw, and when thoughts of his home, and cruelly-deserted mother and sister crossed his mind, he continued to banish them as soon as possible, as unwelcome intruders.

He travelled with the companion with whom he left his native place, more than two thousand miles, without stopping more than a day or two at any one place. He had proceeded thus far, before he began to understand the real character of his associate. He had known him at home, and mingled with him in many scenes of dissipation; he also knew he always had an abundance of money with him. He was aware, too, that he was a successful gambler, but never dreamed he had ever resorted to means more guilty than that, for the sake of gold.

After spending several months in roving from place to place, and indulging in unhallowed enjoyments in his con-

taminating society, Frederic one day said to him, 'It is high time I was pursuing some steady employment; I must settle somewhere, for a year at least.'

'Pursue the same calling I do;' answered his professed friend.

'And what is that?' asked the young man.

'Why, follow the sea part of the time, which is all that is necessary for me to do,' responded the other.

'I am ignorant of every thing concerning the management of a vessel,' answered Frederic, 'and it would be worse than useless for me to embark upon the ocean, expecting to gain a livelihood in following the seas; besides, I have no taste for the life of a sailor.'

'You need not do any thing towards managing the vessel, if you will go with me. I go as commander, sent out by a company of individuals who pay liberally enough, I assure you; and all on board share in the profits made,' said the man.

'But to what port did you last sail?' inquired the interested young man.

'I sail not to any particular port,' answered the other, 'but cruise upon the ocean, in order to procure treasure from richly laden ships we meet.'

'You do not mean that you are a pirate?' inquired Frederick, with a look of horror.

'O, no,' responded the captain; 'some puritanical fellows might call us so. We do not go out intending to murder any we meet. All I desire is, that those who have property in their possession on the public seas, should yield it up when I call for it. I intend no harm to them;

if they have not courage to keep possession of their goods, I am not to blame.'

This vile man then gave his young companion an account of some of his adventures; of the vast amount of wealth he had secured since engaging in this atrocious enterprise. At first, the mind of Frederic was shocked at the recital, and the idea that he had become the intimate friend of a pirate, was revolting to his feelings; still, with all his boasted hardihood and bravery, he had not courage to do right.

Conscience sometimes whispered that he ought to break off at once his acquaintance with his vile associate, and choose the path of morality and virtue. Sometimes, too, the question would intrude itself into his feverish mind, 'What would my mother think, if she knew with whom I have been associated since I left her?'

Any such thoughts were painful to his mind. He was unwilling to write to his mother, or have her know where he was. He felt unhappy and degraded, yet was bound to the individual who had allured him from his native place, by the strong power of fascination. The longer he remained under his influence, the less he thought of leaving him; until at length he made up his mind to follow his example, and lead the awful life of a pirate!

It will be recollected that Frederic cultivated a cruel disposition, when very young. In more mature years, he was destitute of that tender-heartedness so peculiarly lovely in young men; therefore it was not so hard for him to be reconciled to witnessing human suffering.

While on his first expedition of crime, he often suffered from painful recollections of the past; but, by being jeered

at by his companions in wickedness, in striving to evince his hard-heartedness, he soon became as depraved as the worst of them. Never, it is true, could a remembrance of his affectionate mother and lovely sister come to mind, without arousing a feeling of which he soon strove to rid himself.

Years passed, and no tidings were heard of this deserter of his home, by his longing and still affectionate friends. During these years, the object of their tender solicitude was spending his life in the most soul-revolting and wretched of employments. The writer, judging from her own taste and feelings, presumes the reader will gladly pass over most of the time without particular notice, in which the once interesting Frederick Jefford was engaged in scenes of rapine and bloodshed upon the seas, upon which the mind cannot dwell without feelings of horror and disgust.

The last time this lost son and brother embarked upon one of these tragical expeditions, he was only twenty-five years of age. At this time, the bark in which he sailed, the sight of which had so often filled the mind of the sailor with dismay, had not been out many days, ere she came within sight of a merchantman. She immediately pursued this ship, which was richly laden, and soon overtook her. As may be expected, the commander of this vessel refused, when ordered to surrender, upon which a dreadful conflict ensued. A full description of this scene of carnage will not be attempted; it is enough to know that many precious lives were sacrificed on board the merchantman, while several of the poor wretches belonging to the other

vessel were also killed. Both vessels, too, were much injured. The pirate captain was among the first who fell.

The trading vessel continued to resist, until but three of those on board remained. One was the captain, another a sailor before the mast, and the third a gentleman passenger, while only two of the invaders remained alive. By this time, the ammunition of the merchantman was exhausted. During the scene of confusion and slaughter, two of the pirates were accidentally knocked overboard; and, as their comrades at the time were too much engaged to assist them, were drowned. It would seem as if Providence thus kindly interposed in behalf of the merchantman.

By this time, the two vessels had approached along side each other, and the captain of the trading ship resolutely determined to board the other. Frederic was one of the pirates remaining on board. The captain, in attempting to board their shattered bark, was furiously resisted. Frederic was foremost in striving to prevent his doing so, and with surprising agility managed to evade his brave opposers, and jump on board their vessel. His companion instantly followed his example. Frederic seized the captain, and his comrade gave the sailor a blow which laid him prostrate upon the deck, then in an instant sprang towards the passenger, who had just left the cabin. He raised his hand, which grasped an instrument of death, with which he was about to assail him, when Frederick cried out, imploringly,

'Stop, comrade! spare that man!' while his hold instantly relaxed, which he had until that moment retained of the captain: his arm seemed paralyzed.

'Frederic Jefford,' said the passenger in a mild tone, approaching him and gazing earnestly at the face of the ruffian, 'do I behold thee? can I credit the evidence of my senses, that I now see before me the son of my much loved friend? — behold him, too, the worst of robbers, his hands yet reeking with the blood of his innocent victims?'

'Mr. Hammond, the gentleman, paused. The astonished young man spoke not. His companion in guilt, too, seemed overawed, and for a moment all were silent.

The dignified passenger had known Frederic, from his birth until the time he clandestinely left his home. From that time until he saw him jump upon the deck of the merchantman, he had known nothing concerning him. Notwithstanding he was aware that Frederick had been a reckless youth, and knew, too, under what circumstances he had left his native place, his astonishment was exceedingly great on finding him thus abandoned.

The surprise of Frederic, on beholding Mr. Hammond, exceeded if possible that of this individual, on seeing him. In a moment, a multitude of tender recollections, associated with the remembrance of this gentleman, crowded at once into his mind, and overwhelmed his spirit. He had ever been wont to regard Mr. Hammond with a feeling of reverence and affection. He knew that his father had loved him as an own dear brother; and that after the death of that parent, this gentleman and his family had most tenderly sympathized with his mother in her affliction. He knew too, that Mr. Hammond had ever felt a lively interest in her welfare and that of her children. Besides all this, he was a near and dear relative of Mr.

Hilton, whom, notwithstanding the degradation of his own mind, he still respected.

After this Providential interview with his friend, Frederic made no further effort to take possession of the vessel; and his companion, finding he would be alone if he attempted further resistance, surrendered also.

The blow which the sailor had received from the ruffian who felled him to the deck, was not fatal; he soon recovered from its effect and arose. The captain, with the assistance of this man, immediately made prisoners of Frederic and his associate in crime.

After putting the vessel into as favorable a condition as they could under the circumstances, they pursued their way to the nearest port, and not long after arrived in this country.

During the remainder of the voyage Mr. Hammond conversed much with the prisoners, as he felt deeply interested for both, particularly so for Frederic; and he was encouraged to trust that the prayers of his mother for her son, had been heard and answered. The heart of the long hardened young man was touched with tenderness, whenever the name of his mother was mentioned; and with a feeling of gratitude he informed this friend of the disinterested kindness of Mr. Hilton towards him.

'O,' said Frederic, with deep feeling, 'had I not been so awfully perverse, I should have been effectually won to the path of peace and virtue by his great kindness; but I have proved most ungrateful. When my eye first rested upon your well-remembered countenance,' continued the humbled individual, 'as you strongly resembled Mr. Hil-

ton I was in a moment reminded of the debt of gratitude due him from me. That, with the reflection of your past friendship, and my cruelty to my mother and Myra, was what overpowered me. As if directly held by the arm of Omnipotence, I was unable to make further effort. I thank God,' added he, 'that He thus arrested me in my awful career of guilt.'

In view of the fact that his life had been forfeited by his crimes, and that justice required him to expiate them by submitting to the infliction of the penalty which the law demanded, he said, 'I deserve to die an ignominious death; but I must,' added he, 'be tried for my crimes under a name assumed when I first embarked in the atrocious enterprise, which I feel has ended with me better than it began.'

Frederic said, several times, when speaking of his mother, 'I have already caused her too much pain, she must not know my end; better will it be for her to remain ignorant of my fate.'

Soon after the vessel arrived in one of our southern ports, Frederic and his associate were tried for the awful crime of piracy, after a confinement of only a few days. As was expected, they were found guilty and sentenced to die upon the scaffold.

After Frederic was remanded to prison, to await his doom, Mr. Hammond revisited the place where he was confined, for the purpose of seeing him. He had much conversation with him, and after listening to his confessions, witnessing his apparent humility, he could not but trust that almighty grace had subdued his once stubborn heart.

Frederic desired that his example might be a warning to other young men who possessed dispositions like his own.

He expressed a feeling of regret that he could not pen a farewell letter to his mother and sister without overwhelming them with sorrow.

'Would,' said he, 'that they could know the self-abhorrence I feel on reviewing my past life, and the joy I experience in realizing that Jesus died for the very vilest of sinners. But they must not know it now; they will learn it hereafter, when the knowledge of it will not cause them pain.'

It is believed that this repentant man continued in this interesting frame of mind until his execution took place. Mr. Hammond was careful not to relate to Mrs. Jefford all the circumstances which occurred during his voyage from Europe, upon which he met her son, lest he should betray his knowledge of the mad career and disgraceful end of the unhappy son and brother.

But these dreadful truths were not to remain long a secret to her. Mr. Hammond very naturally related the thrilling circumstances connected with his voyage to several of his friends, whom he felt confident would not mention the subject to the mother of Frederic.

On one occasion, a juvenile member of a family he was visiting, heard this affecting relation, and without realizing that it was wrong to do so, unthinkingly stated the facts in the presence of a person through whose means the heart-rending intelligence was soon conveyed to the afflicted mother. When she heard the abrupt, unfeeling expression made, that the real name of one of the pirates lately executed was said to be Frederic Jefford, her feelings were overpowered, and she immediately fainted.

On recovering, she was told by the same individual who caused so much pain, not to distress herself upon the subject, for it might not be her son, but another of the same name. She was told that Mr. Hammond was in the same vessel which brought those pirates into port, and was acquainted with all the circumstances connected with the tragical affair.

Mrs. Jefford was glad to learn this fact, and sent immediately for Mr. Hammond. He very soon called upon her, when she told him of what she had heard, and entreated him to tell her all he knew relative to her son. 'Tell me all,' repeated she, in an imploring tone, 'even the very worst.'

The heart of the generous man was pained. He shrunk from the task she would impose upon him, and hesitated a few moments ere he spoke. He then said, 'I have seen your Frederic.'

The mother then quickly asked, 'Was he executed for piracy?'

Mr. Hammond was silent. Mrs. Jefford and her daughter both carefully observed the expression of his countenance, and saw that it was distressed. The mother said, addressing him, 'I presume we may consider your silence as an affirmative answer to my question. O!' continued she, wringing her hands in agony of feeling, 'then my darling Frederic died an ignominious death! O, my Heavenly Father, support me in this bitter trial!'

Mr. Hammond did not interrupt the grief of this sorrowing mother and daughter, but allowed them to give vent to their feelings by weeping for a time. Although himself was one of those who had acquired an uncommon

habit of self control, still, on this occasion he was much moved.

As soon as Mrs. Jefford became sufficiently composed to speak, she said to her sympathizing friend, 'I hope you can tell me that my son became a Christian, for I had always expected, perhaps too confidently, that wayward as he was, God, by His grace, would reclaim this wanderer.'

'Thy faith,' answered Mr. Hammond, 'has been signally honored, in regard to thy prodigal child. Thy Frederic, I believe, became a child of God.'

He then related to the mother and daughter the most interesting of the facts already known to the reader. After being informed of his feelings respecting his dearest friends at home, and his grateful remembrance of the friends of his father, Mrs. Jefford exclaimed, 'O, I thank my Father in heaven that even in the bitterest cup there are commingled drops of mercy. God has been faithful in His covenant with me, but I have been unfaithful to Him. I did not train Frederic in every respect as I promised to do; I allowed maternal feeling to triumph over my better judgment, and indulged him to his hurt; for this I have been chastised. I should have been firm in endeavoring to keep Frederic from the influence of the vicious, when he was a boy. But God has graciously given me faith to sustain me during my trials on account of my son, and at the last has as graciously rewarded it. May mothers profit by my experience!'

The sister of Frederic, as has been before stated, was a feeble girl. Her health always continued delicate. The anxiety she endured during the absence of her ungrateful

brother, on his account, preyed upon her constitution. Her affection for the prodigal was very great. Not one day passed while this brother was absent from his home, but Myra saw him in imagination, and sometimes thus beheld him engaged in scenes the influence of which she greatly feared would render him unhappy during his whole life.

The thought, however, had never entered the mind of this sister, that her brother could ever in the slightest degree be guilty of the crimes for which he died, and she never entirely recovered from the overwhelming effect which the intelligence of his desperate course had upon her gentle spirit. It is true she murmured not that it was her lot to endure so dreadful a trial, and felt grateful that she had heard the last end of her very dear, though misguided brother had been peaceful, for she thought of the thief upon the cross, and felt encouraged to trust that even her depraved brother was in heaven, having received pardon from his God and Savior.

The health of the lovely Myra sunk rapidly, after having been made acquainted with the heart-rending facts which have been described; and her mother soon realized the painful truth, that the life and suffering of her daughter were soon to close. Myra, too, was conscious that she was fast hastening to another world; yet all that was mournful in this reflection to her mind, was the idea that her widowed and deeply-sorrowing mother would soon be childless. On one occasion, she mentioned these feelings to her anxious and affectionate parent.

As Mrs. Jefford listened to the remarks of her kind and grateful child, she wept. 'It is true,' responded she to Myra, 'when you are gone, I shall be left quite alone. I

should rejoice to know that you might be permitted to live and attend me on my dying couch, and thus soothe my sufferings to the end of life. Yet as it does not seem best that it should be so, I will endeavor to be thankful that I have enjoyed your society so long, and that I have reason to trust that when I cease to enjoy the manifestations of your affections here, you, my dear daughter, will be free from sorrow, sin, and care. It would be selfish in me to wish to detain you longer in this world; much more so to embitter the remaining days and hours of your existence by my selfish sorrow. The circumstances, too, under which you leave me, my dear child, ought to reconcile me to your premature departure. I thank my Heavenly Father, that the trial is not heavier.'

It is believed Mrs. Jefford felt most deeply the last sentiment she had uttered, for she was often heard to say, that could she have been permitted the privilege of attending her darling Frederic during a fatal illness, and have heard him express satisfaction at the reflection that he was in the hands of a faithful God, and afterwards have seen him close his eyes peacefully in death, she could not have felt afflicted. It is true she gathered solace from what she had heard concerning the last weeks and days of her unfortunate and guilty son, but, after her endeared and interesting Myra was gone to return no more, she longed for the time of her own departure from this world of vicissitude, sin, and pain.

Mrs. Jefford lived only a few years from the time she heard of the tragical end of her first-born and dearly beloved child. Her end was peaceful, and her example in every thing save one, worthy of imitation.

CHAPTER XXII.

Conclusion.

The members of the *Weldron family* whose history, as the reader has seen, is very peculiar and instructive, often reviewed the past, as connected with much designed to illustrate the important truth, that a departure from moral rectitude is sure to involve the erring in perplexity and sorrow. It is believed they profited by the experience of the many who pursued the rough path of trial and disappointment, who, being nearly allied to them, had an influence in deterring their friends from imitating their pernicious example.

It is true, also, that much, very much was drawn from the conduct of such as followed the path of virtue, that awakened in the hearts of those who ever delighted to dwell upon their characters, a love for the lofty and ennobling traits which they discovered in them.

Should the foregoing pages fall beneath the eye of any who feel that the standard of duty erected is too high to be easily attained, it is hoped they will not lay the book aside as teaching error, until they are certain that they are right in forming such an opinion. The author contends that the views here presented of human nature, are

correct. The characters brought before the mind are not isolated cases, taken from the family of man; their faults are such as are common to all. Facts may easily be adduced, from the experience and observation of every week, to substantiate this statement. The virtues pointed out, too, may be copied by all who will look above themselves for strength to go forward in the path of life and peace.

The important truth has been kept in view, that whoever trusts to his own heart is most unwise. What the reader has read is not fiction. The circumstances related have occurred; and it would be easy to point out the spots where now repose the ashes of some whose thrilling history has been feebly portrayed.

In taking leave of the indulgent reader, the writer would say: let us strive, as individuals responsible for the influence we daily exert, to reach even a higher standard than has now been presented; and let us not be discouraged, if we fail in our attempts to do right, every day. We shall be sure to make advances, if we persevere; for He is faithful who has promised to afford us help; and if we faint not, we shall in the end reap a rich harvest, and be blest in the reflection that we have been enabled to conquer selfishness, and every attendant evil. Then, and not till then, may we expect to be happy, and answer the great end of our existence, in exerting a lasting and salutary influence upon the world.

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